

ENGG1400

Designing Your Life for Engineering Undergraduates

(1-credit free elective)



THE HONG KONG
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE
AND TECHNOLOGY

CAREER CENTER

Course Description

Originated from Stanford University's Life Design Lab (Bill Burnett and Dave Evans), this course employs a method called "design thinking" to help students from any program develop a constructive and effective approach to finding and designing their vocation after university. Through small group discussions, in-class activities, personal reflections and individual coaching, this course teaches students to use design thinking to explore many of life's major challenges, such as pursuing careers they love and finding personal fulfillment.

Students are expected to acquire knowledge on prototype behaviors, ideation, and designs for things that one can do and try on their own. Students will get exposure to the heart of the design thinking process, and practice the steps of empathizing, defining and framing design problems, ideation, prototyping and testing prototypes in action and in conversation. Students will use the mindsets of a designer on one's own life and to get unstuck. By the end of the term, students will be able to apply the design process on problems that matter to their own.

Topics include the integration of work and worldviews, ideation techniques, a portfolio approach to thriving, designing to increase balance and energy and how to prototype all aspects of life. We also touch on the realities of engaging the workplace, and practices that support vocation formation throughout your life. The capstone assignment is the creation of an "Odyssey Plan" focusing on taking actions in the 3-5 years following one's HKUST graduation.

The Rationale Behind

One of the very popular questions from students is "What do I want to do after I graduate?"

This course employs a design thinking approach to help students from any major develop a constructive and effective approach to finding and designing their lives and vocations after HKUST.

Design thinking is a human-centered approach to problem solving and innovation through prototype iteration. It is highly collaborative and a hands-on process for conceiving new solutions and getting unstuck. Design thinking emphasizes learning by doing and through feedback and iteration, allows students to make ideas real in the world. This approach lends itself especially well to the challenge of designing one's life and vocation, large and vaguely defined tasks, because it allows students to start where they are - and build from there.

While some people really do know what they want to do with their lives, many people have to try a few things out and learn as they go. The steps along the way are prototypes to enjoy and learn from, not failures.

Intended Learning Outcomes

1. Use design thinking to demonstrate a growth mindset that is an essential foundation for life design.
2. Practice the skills of self-management, reflection, and way finding to chart a personal life and career path.
3. Demonstrate confidence and self-belief to explore different career options.
4. Integrate different planning strategies to design a successful life.

Internationalization Elements

- i) The concept is adopted from Stanford University
- ii) The book “Designing your Life” (SBN# 9781101875322) is an international material
- iii) One of the topics includes the integration of work and worldviews

Teaching Arrangement

Tutorial setting for 30 pax maximum, meet once a week for 1 hour 50 mins for the whole term.

Enrollment

Students can enroll in the course via SIS.

Assessment Weightings

Written Assignments	30%
Final Presentation	20%
Course Participation	10%
Attendance	40%
Total	100%

The course will be graded Pass/Fail.

Passing mark: 60%

Attendance and Course Participation

Participation is a very important element of the course. Attendance at all classes is mandatory unless by special arrangement. Students are allowed only 1 pre-planned absence (inclusive of the add/drop period*).

Missing more than 1 class for no reason will result in 0% in both attendance and participation.

* Important remarks during the add/drop period:

Attendance during the add/drop period is taken into account. Absence during the add/drop period for students who have not yet registered for the course will not be counted towards the quota for pre-planned absence. For students who have registered, any no-shows will be counted towards the pre-planned absence.

Written Assignments

The written assignments consist of:

Assignment 1	Worldview Writing	5%
Assignment 2	Workview Writing	5%
Assignment 3	PERMA Assessment	3%
Assignment 4	Odyssey Plan + Letter to Your Future Self	10%
Assignment 5	Take-it-home Canvas	7%

Students are required to complete and submit all assignments set throughout the course on time, regardless of their presence in / absence from class when the assignment is due.

Students are to expect 30-60 minutes of reading and one or two hours of written work and reflection exercises outside of class.

Weekly Schedule (12-week curriculum)

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Week	Topic	Assignment
01	Creating Community & Course Introduction Design thinking overview	
02	What is Success? Define your workview Social identities reflection	Workview Writing
03	Designing a Work Compass Cultivating Coherence and Well-being Workview-worldview Integration	Worldview Writing
04	Balance and Energy Awareness Getting Unstuck (Part 1): Framing and Reframing Problems re-defined	PERMA Balance Assessment Power of Pause Survey
05	Getting Unstuck (Part 2): The Power of Ideation Schemas and breakthroughs Complete Design Activity	
06	Importance of Network Inbound and outbound networking	Informational Interview Reflection
07	The Power of Pause	
08	Decision-making and Discernment Decision matrix, models, and the ways of knowing.	
09	Designing into Your Future: Odyssey Building & Sharing	Odyssey Plan Development
10	Radical Collaboration: Brainstorming for Prototyping Bring your odysseys to life!	Take-it-home Canvas
11	Storytelling Vision & Actions	Final individual presentation
12	Impact, Meaning & Final Takeaways	