SA+P

New Design Minor (D-Minor) to launch in Fall 2016

The Department of Architecture will launch a new Minor in Design (D-Minor) in Fall 2016. "Undergraduates across MIT are excited about design. They're participating in increasing numbers in classes and research projects that engage challenging, multi-disciplinary design problems. We are delighted to now offer our very creative and talented undergrads a more structured opportunity to pursue their particular design interests," says Terry Knight, Professor of Design and Computation and Design Minor Advisor.

The D-Minor will provide a hub for undergraduate students to learn core principles of design in dynamic studio settings, develop a sensibility for visual and physical form, and help contribute to new ways of designing that are applicable across a spectrum of areas. The D-Minor introduces design from concept to completion through contextual critical thinking, experimental representation, physical production techniques, and processes of critique, iteration, and reflection.

This minor is a way for students who see the value of design as a means of approaching problems they normally encounter within their own major to receive a rigorous conceptual foundation along with a strong design skill set. The objective is to prepare students to pursue diverse career paths or further education in multiple areas of design from product design to 3-D design to visual communication, and to enable them to take advantage of emerging opportunities in industry and academia.

"The new design minor is rooted in studio-based design teaching and diverse faculty expertise in technological to socio-cultural aspects of design. We're looking forward to meeting our first group of 'D-Minors' in the fall, as our new line-up of subjects gets underway," says Knight.

This semester, the department offered three prototypes of the D-Minor foundation subjects:

Skylar Tibbits (Reseach Scientist and Director of the Self-Assembly Lab) and Caitlin Mueller(Assistant Professor of Building Technology) are co-teaching an introductory design course, 'Exploring Design: Thinking Through Making', with invited lecturer Jessica Rosenkrantz. Rosenkrantz '07 was a dual major in architecture and biology at MIT before founding Nervous System with Jesse Louis-Rosenberg.

Lisa Smith (BSAD '04 and Creative Director of Areaware) and Marcelo Coelho (MAS '12 , Marcelo Coelho Studio), are teaching a course entitled 'Design Objects'. The course is an introduction to the "products, furniture, and other everyday accoutrements that shape our modern daily experience — and the role technology plays in design," explain Coelho and Smith.

Finally, Ben Fry (MAS '04, Principal of Fathom) is teaching 'Information Design: Exploration, Navigation and Understanding' which introduces students to data analysis, visual design and presentation, and interaction techniques.

Please visit the D-Minor webpage for full information on the new D-Minor foundation subjects to be offered in Fall 2016. To apply for the D-Minor, download and complete the minor application form from the MIT Registrar's website and make an appointment to meet with Terry Knight, the Design Minor advisor.

Images:

Willy Wu's generative drawings for Design Making, taught by Skylar Tibbits, Jessica Rosenkrantz, and Caitlin Mueller.
Aya Suzuki's project for Design Objects, taught by Lisa Smith and Marcelo Coelho.
Hannah Lienhard's project crystallizes structures for an exercise on reversible fabrication; Design Making, taught by Skylar Tibbits, Jessica Rosenkrantz, and Caitlin Mueller.
Maggie Hughes' reversible fabrication system for Design Making, taught by Skylar Tibbits, Jessica Rosenkrantz, and Caitlin Mueller.