

# DESN 1004 DESIGN HISTORIES AND FUTURES (WSTC)

**Credit Points** 10

**Legacy Code** 700195

**Coordinator** Ben Fletcher ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Ben Fletcher/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Ben%20Fletcher/))

**Description** This subject introduces students to historical accounts and theories of design from two dominant perspectives, modernism and postmodernism. Students learn a contextual history of 20th century design practice by studying the doctrines around which the modernist movement cohered and the conditions under which these doctrines are questioned by postmodernism. The subject will explore various roles of the visual designer through history such as the avant gardist, futurist, revolutionary, utopian, client-service designer, social activist, producer and digital enabler, as these roles were expressed across a range of design outcomes such as photography, typography, illustration, print media, graphics, digital design, film and animation over a century and beyond. Part of this exploration will examine the impacts of design histories on our past, present and future conditions, as well as the investments in changing the future for design. Students will complete visual and writing tasks that aim to build their understanding of design histories and futures, and scholarship in academic research and writing.

**School** Humanities & Comm Arts

**Discipline** Graphic Design Studies

**Student Contribution Band** HECS Band 2 10cp

Check your fees via the Fees ([https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current\\_students/fees/](https://www.westernsydney.edu.au/currentstudents/current_students/fees/)) page.

**Level** Undergraduate Level 1 subject

**Co-requisite(s)** Students enrolled in the combined DiplomaBachelor courses listed below must pass all College Preparatory units listed in the course structure before progressing to the Year Two units

**Equivalent Subjects** DESN 1003 - Design Histories and Futures DESN 1001 - 20th Century Design Histories

## Restrictions

Students must be enrolled at Western Sydney University, The College. Students enrolled in extended diplomas must pass 40 credit points from the preparatory subjects listed in the program structure prior to enrolling in this University level subject.

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this subject, students should be able to:

1. Identify and analyse examples of design as part of historical contexts of visual practice/ experimentation, ideas, social and/or cultural events.
2. Explain influential cultural themes, theories and doctrines that inform the design histories considered with reference to primary and secondary literature about exemplary design approaches.
3. Evaluate the contributions of select designers to these movements and periods of design practice by analysing examples,

professional/cultural roles and relevant literature and by making thinking visible through a design outcome.

4. Demonstrate understanding of the impact of design on contemporary society and the sustainability of the future.
5. Demonstrate research and English language literacy for critical thinking and writing about design history and scholarship.
6. Demonstrate understanding of the impact of design on contemporary society and the sustainability of the future.

## Subject Content

1. Introduction: understanding design's impact on the past, present and future.
2. Modernism: the experience of industrial urbanism and cultural response to modernity.
3. Experimental graphic design, futurism and European modernist avant garde.
4. Constructivism, utopianism and the revolutionary role of the designer in the Soviet transformation.
5. The Bauhaus: modernist principles and Eurocentric model of design education.
6. The new typography and the dissemination of graphic principles as the international style.
7. Consumerism and the assimilation of the international style into global corporate visual identity systems.
8. Postmodernism, new wave and punk graphics.
9. Digital design enablers of networked communication.
10. Revolution against corporate culture: the graphic designer, social responsibility and activism.
11. Imagining the future: design's speculations about future life and 'social dreaming'
12. Sustainable design: sustainable futures and 'futuring'
1. Introduction: understanding design's

## Assessment

The following table summarises the standard assessment tasks for this subject. Please note this is a guide only. Assessment tasks are regularly updated, where there is a difference your Learning Guide takes precedence.

Type	Length	Percent	Threshold	Individual/ Group Task	Mandatory
Practical	Total of 1000 words for Quiz and Practical. Includes visual design.	25	N	Individual	N
Applied Project	Visual work plus 500 word narrative	25	N	Individual	N
Report	200 words	10	N	Individual	N
Essay	1500 words	40	N	Individual	N

Teaching Periods

## Term 1 (2025)

### Nirimba Education Precinct

#### On-site

**Subject Contact** Ben Fletcher ([https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Ben Fletcher/](https://directory.westernsydney.edu.au/search/name/Ben+Fletcher/))

View timetable ([https://classregistration.westernsydney.edu.au/odd/timetable/?subject\\_code=DESN1004\\_25-T1\\_BL\\_1#subjects](https://classregistration.westernsydney.edu.au/odd/timetable/?subject_code=DESN1004_25-T1_BL_1#subjects))