

POLITECNICO DI MILANO



Scuola di Dottorato  
Scuola del Design

## Practicing Collaboration in Research

2012 | One week Monday-to-Friday course  
with foreign professors

Professor in charge: Silvia Pizzocarò  
Co-ordination: Elena Caratti

For further details:  
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DIPARTIMENTO INDACO  
DdR IN DESIGN

## COURSE OVERVIEW

Research collaboration is everywhere: in the world of technology, in scientific networks, in product development and also in the world of ideas. It is discussed in social research, management and economics. Further, it is a central idea in the media and in public policy. Although occurring with increasing frequency also in planning disciplines, border-crossing research collaboration is an activity without substantial theory or process development in these fields, where it happens in an ad hoc manner.

This intensive course, based on a one week Monday-to-Friday sequence of lectures, is designed to offer:

- exploration of definitions for collaboration in planning disciplines;
- description of benefits and problems of research interplay and border crossing;
- identification of variables that may characterize collaborative research practice in planning disciplines;
- reflection on theoretical opportunities and limitations to mapping the idea of research collaboration in planning disciplines;
- examination of collaborative research cases.

To articulate the status and perspectives on these issues, an international panel of distinguished scholars will respectively be asked to develop and argue the idea of research collaboration both as a category of design thinking and research practice.

## COURSE CONTENTS

Unifying guidelines for the sequence of expected lectures will be: concepts involved for the idea of research collaboration: i.e. research interplay, cooperation, knowledge integration, cross-fertilization, border crossing, vision sharing, knowledge transfer; conceptual frameworks to explain and to nurture research interplay and border crossing in planning disciplines; cultural aspects of research collaboration; values, benefits and limits in collaborative processes; patterns of collaboration: cases, contexts, potentials.

## LECTURES

Leading questions for the lectures contents will be:

How is the idea of research interplay spontaneously understood in technical and planning disciplines?

Why has knowledge transfer acquired such a central place in contemporary research or, to put it differently, where precisely does the idea of collaborative research come from? How is the idea of knowledge transfer and cross-fertilization best expressed as a research paradigm in the disciplinary areas of product engineering, architecture, town planning, product design, strategic design, interior design, building engineering?

## COURSE ORGANIZATION

A sequence of long lectures by international lecturers for a Monday-to-Friday single week course. Each lecture is expected to be articulated into guidelines for participants, introduction by a moderator, lecture and comments from the ground. The course will include lectures as well as critical and participatory debate with enrolled PhD students. Lectures will include group work based on the students own research projects. Suggested literature, essays, selected annotated bibliography for each lecture and cross-lecture readings will provide the basis for PhD students active involvement. The sequence of lectures will be preceded by the opening seminar, offering introduction, instructions and guidelines to the sequence of lectures. Expectations are that participants will attend the Monday-to-Friday afternoon lectures, providing shared contribution to the collective reflection. The course will be followed at short distance by the sessions of oral interviews to provide final evaluation of participants.

## REQUIREMENTS

- 80% attendance
  - active participation to class debates
  - oral final interview
- Course language: English  
Final interview language: English or Italian

## VENUE

Bovisa campus, Building 8, School of Design,  
via Durando 10, 20158 Milano

## PROGRAMME

June 4th, 2012, Monday, h.14.30-19.00, room CT 68

**Prof. Silvia Pizzocaro, Prof. Elena Caratti**

*A toolbox for collaborative research.*

*Opening seminar and course guidelines*

June 18th, Monday, h.14.30-19.00, room CT 68

**Prof. Keiichi Sato**

*Language of collaboration: Forming meta-knowledge for bridging multiple viewpoints in Research and Design*

June 19th, Tuesday, h.14.30-19.00, room CT 57

**Prof. Vesna Popovic**

*Cross Disciplinary Research: Methodology and Practices Across Domains*

June 20th, Wednesday, h.14.30-19.00, room CT 67

**Prof. Olavo Bessa**

*Design in Context: from Government Policies to Interventions*

June 21st, Thursday, h.14.30-19.00, room CT 65

**Prof. Chris Rust**

*The uses of participatory design methods in interdisciplinary research*

*The concept of generative contributions to knowledge.*

June 22nd, Friday, h.14.30-19.00, room CT 68

Closing seminar

Contacts:

silvia.pizzocaro@polimi.it, elena.caratti@polimi.it

Secretariat: Simona Murina

## LECTURERS



**Chris Rust,**  
Professor, Head of Art and Design  
Sheffield Hallam University, UK

Chris Rust is Professor of Design and Head of the Art & Design Department at Sheffield Hallam University, England. He has been an academic at Sheffield Hallam since 1991.

His previous role was Head of the Art and Design Research Centre from 2004-2009. He is also Director of Sheffield Institute of Arts which provides the public face and academic direction for the University's work in Design, Media Arts, Fine Art and Communication.

His professional background is in Industrial design where he focused on designing vehicles for people with disabilities. More recently his research and professional practice has been concerned with interactive media.

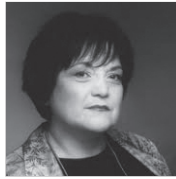
His research has investigated with the role of tacit knowledge in design, arising from his experience of research projects in which designing plays an instrumental part in investigations into problems in other disciplines.

He has taken an active role in the development of practice led research and doctorates in design and the creative disciplines. Until 2009 he was Chair of the Council of the Design Research Society, the only international society open to researchers in every area of designing and every country.

His teaching work is a postgraduate module called Creativity, Innovation and Professionalism for all Masters students in Design subjects at SHU.

He is widely known for his work on practice-based research methods, or Investigative Designing, and he is frequently invited to speak on this at other universities.

Outside Academia he is very interested in the development of cycling as a mainstream form of transport and his retirement plans include applying design skills to social innovation in that area.



**Vesna Popovic**  
Professor, Queensland University of  
Technology, Australia

Vesna Popovic, PhD is a Professor in Industrial design at the Queensland University of Technology and she is founder of the Industrial Design infrastructure in Brisbane, Queensland. She has worked as corporate and practicing industrial designer and ergonomics/human factors consultant and was involved in international studies conducted by ICSID (International Council of Societies of Industrial Design).

She is Fellow of the Design Institute of Australia and Fellow of the Design Research Society (UK).

She was the Executive Board Member of the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID), Education Chair 1997-2001. Since 2001 she has been an ICSID adviser.

She has been a Fulbright scholar. Professor Vesna Popovic has been pioneering in implementing research as a vehicle for human-centred innovation as applied to complex devices.

Her main research interests involve expertise and user research, applied product design research, artifact use and impacts on expertise and interaction, relationships between design and knowledge, knowledge integration and knowledge as a resource to support and promote innovation.

Vesna Popovic has published widely and is recipient of significant awards and recognitions.

She is recipient of three Australian Research Council grants.



**Keiichi Sato**  
Professor, Charles L. Owen Chair  
Institute of Design, Illinois Institute  
of Technology, USA

Keiichi Sato is a professor and Coordinator of Ph.D. program at the Institute of Design, IIT. His research and teaching focuses on design theory and methodology, product and system architecture, human-centered system integration, and interactive systems design. His research focuses on the creation of theories, methods and tools that facilitate the development of interactive products, systems and services with convivial qualities as well as effective performance. With his long time multi-disciplinary experience in developing new areas and enhancing the quality of design research, he is interested in developing research initiatives in new interdisciplinary areas as well as enhancing core areas of design research.

The recent projects include robotic system integration for health care and elderly care environments, automotive system design with automated driving technologies, ambient Interactive systems, contextsensitive service systems, and design information management. He has been a reviewer for journals and conferences, an editor for special issues of journals, and an editorial board member for International Journal of Design. He has served conference committees, boards of academic organizations, government committees, and doctoral committees and program review boards of universities worldwide. He has published more than 80 papers, articles and book chapters. He received many awards for his academic and professional work including Best Paper Awards at ASME-DTM Conference, IEEE Robotics and Human Interactive Communications Symposium, and ACM/IEEE Design Automation Conference. His design also received Design Innovation award at Haus Industrieform Essen. He is Fellow of Design Research Society, member of IEEE, ACM, ASME, Design Society, Japanese Society for Science of Design. He has been Visiting Professor at Darmstadt University of Technology, and Musashino University of Fine Arts. He has taught design and engineering at Kyoto Institute of Technology and Osaka Institute of Technology. He studied systems engineering, human factors and product design and holds BS and MS in Engineering and MS in Product Design.

## LECTURERS



**Olavo Bessa,**

Professor, Univ. Federal do Rio Grande do Norte, Brasil

Olavo Bessa, Ph.D., is a professor and Coordinator of the Design course at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte.

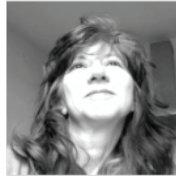
He holds a graduate degree in Design (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro) and a Master of Science also in Design (Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro).

He received his Ph.D. degree in Industrial Design and Multimedia Communication at Politecnico di Milano. Currently he is a member of the Ergodesign group of research and collaborator as designer of the NATA (Center for Application of Advanced Technologies), located at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte.

His main research interests focus on human gestural behaviour as a source of information about the quality of the relationship between people-environment and people-artifacts.

Over the years his research activities have been related to studies about the relationship between people and digital artifacts. Currently he is actively involved in the possibility that the urban built environment can offer to design practices.

His latest research activity deals with the practice of design in urban built environment and the way these practices can support the generation of people emerging subjectivities. His current research interests are mainly driven by participatory techniques and tools.



**Silvia Pizzocaro**

Associate Professor, School of Design, Politecnico di Milano

Silvia Pizzocaro, Ph.D. in Industrial design, is the current Head of the Degree Course in Product Design and of the MA Course in Product Design for Innovation at the School of Design, Politecnico di Milano.

She is Associate professor of Industrial Design at the School of Design and a member of Dipartimento Indaco.

Her study interests range from the design theory to research methods for design. For the present academic year her teaching includes the course “User studies” for the MA degree in Product Design for Innovation and the “Design theory and practice studio” for first year beginners.

Over the years she has worked on design research culture and thinking. Her main interests now focus on user studies, human-centred research methodologies, doctoral research in design.

In 2000 she chaired the “Design plus research” international conference, held at Politecnico di Milano.

Since then she has been joining the debate within the international community of design research either as a committee member and a conference delegate and lecturer.

She regularly blind reviews for international symposia and journals. She has been external examiner for award of Doctor of Philosophy for Queensland University of Technology, for Universidad de Barcelona, for Lund University.



**Elena Caratti**

Assistant Professor, School of Design, Politecnico di Milano

Elena Caratti holds a Degree in Architecture (Politecnico di Milano), a Master degree in E-Design and a Ph.D. in Industrial Design and Multimedia Communication (Politecnico di Milano).

She is currently appointed as Assistant professor at the Dipartimento Indaco (Politecnico di Milano) and Assistant Professor at the School of Design Degree Courses in Communication Design and Product Design (Politecnico di Milano).

Over the years she has gained teaching experience lecturing and carrying out workshops in Australian and Indian design universities.

Her research and didactic activities are focused on basic design and visual cultures, (with a particular interest on the interplay of perceptive and semantic aspects of visual communication) and on the rhetoric dimension and social impact of visual imagery, with particular attention to woman representations through the media.