PROPOSAL FOR NEW COURSE

Design Consulting Practice & Management

Proposed elective course | M.Des., 2nd Semester / 4th Semester

Date : 02nd Nov. 2026

Course Information :

Course no : _____
Course Title : **Design Consulting Practice & Management**
Department : **Department of Design**
Per Week Lectures: 3 (L), Tutorial: 0(T), Laboratory: 0 (P), Additional Hours[0-2]: 0(A), **Credits (3*L+T+P+A): 9**
Duration of Course: **Full Semester**
Other Departments/IDPs which may be interested in the proposed course: _____
Other faculty members interested in teaching the proposed course: _____
Proposing Instructor(s): **Prof. Girish I. Lone**
Course Prerequisite: Preferred Master of Design Students with foundation in design courses finished in earlier semester

Course Description:

Designers professionally work across independent practices like studios, consultancies, startups and multidisciplinary teams in a corporate environment. Designing meaningful solutions for the users / society needs to be complemented by ability to identify opportunities, engage with external clients, define projects scopes, plans and manage design processes to create and communicate value upstream and downstream and eventually build sustainable professional practice.

The course combines conceptual input, case discussions, practical exercises and a simulated consulting engagement. It aims to equip future design entrepreneurs with the knowledge, tools and confidence to take steps towards professional practice and build a sustainable design practice.

It exposes fresh designers to how professional design work is initiated, proposed, priced, organized, communicated and delivered in real client contexts.

Course Objectives:

- Introducing students to different pathways to professional design practice
- Develop the ability to understand their strengths, and position & communicate design practice to potential clients and collaborators
- Develop foundational skills to identify opportunities, understand businesses, interpret briefs and define scope.
- Prepare professional design proposals, estimating time and efforts, planning, resource allocations and managing projects
- Learn how to navigate and understand legal and financial documents like NDA, Intellectual Property, Payment terms etc.
- Build awareness and professional responsibility, needs for specialist collaborations and towards larger goals like society

Learning Outcomes :

1. Articulate an emerging area of design practice and value creation
2. Business modeling and positioning with supporting portfolio, case studies
3. Identify potential clients, business development and project discovery
4. Translate a client brief into a designed scope, deliverables and project approach
5. Prepare basic consulting proposal with professional fees
6. Apply best project management practices, communication strategies, risk mitigations and collaboration with external experts
7. Learn how to read legal and financial documents for informed practice.

Course Plan :

Module	Topic / Description	Outcome
Module 1: Understanding Design Consulting and Professional Practice	Week 1: Forms of design practice; in-house teams, consultancies and independent practice. Week 2: The consultant's role, professional conduct, client organizations and stakeholders.	Activity: Map design engagement and its stakeholders.
Module 2: Client Engagement and Problem Framing	Week 3: Interpreting client briefs; discovery conversations; identifying underlying needs. Week 4: Defining the problem, objectives, success criteria, scope and exclusions.	Assignment 1: Client discovery brief and problem definition.
Module 3: Consulting Proposals and Engagement Design	Week 5: Consulting approach, methodology, work packages, deliverables and assumptions. Week 6: Proposal structure, project estimates, fee logic, timelines and client presentation.	Assignment 2: Consulting proposal and statement of work.
Module 4: Design Project Planning and Management	Week 7: Work breakdown, task dependencies, milestones and scheduling. Week 8: Resource planning, roles, team coordination, communication and review gates. Week 9: Budget tracking, project risks, contingency planning and scope/change control.	Assignment 3: Integrated project plan, resource estimate and risk register.
Module 5: Client Delivery and Professional Practice	Week 10: Managing reviews, feedback, approvals and client expectations. Week 11: Documentation, project reporting, handover and project closure. Week 12: Consultancy operations: positioning, business development, contracts, IP and payment terms. Week 13: Final presentation and retrospective.	Final submission: Consulting engagement plan and client-facing presentation.

Teaching Learning Methods :

1. Lectures and discussion introducing concepts, methods
2. Case study discussions on design consultancies, independent practitioners
3. Practical exercises on Positioning, Client discovery, Scope formulations, Proposal writing
4. Project planning and project management exercises with Plans, WBS, Effort Estimations etc.
5. A simulated design consulting engagement practice
6. Guest interactions with practicing designers, consultants and design entrepreneurs as feasible

References :

- Ulrich, K. T., and Eppinger, S. D. Product Design and Development. McGraw-Hill.
- Project Management Institute. A Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK® Guide). Project Management Institute.
- Osterwalder, A., and Pigneur, Y. Business Model Generation. John Wiley & Sons.

- Cagan, M. Inspired: How to Create Tech Products Customers Love. Wiley.
- Selected case studies, proposals, contracts and professional-practice materials from design consultancies and independent design practitioners.

Dated : 02nd Nov. 2026 **Proposer :** Prof. Girish I. Lone

Dated: _____ **DUGC/DPGC Convener:** _____