

Invitation NORDCODE PhD-Seminars 2008:

Communicative aspects of design

- Aim, structure and relevance of your Thesis

NORDCODE is organising a doctoral course consisting of three seminars. These are to be held in Skövde (April 2008), Lund (May 2008, in connection to the larger NORDCODE seminar), and Oslo (October 2008). The objective of the seminars is to support doctoral students within design research by providing them with an arena for discussing their ongoing research projects with peers and senior academics. In specific, focus is on developing the students' research design and methods, and enhancing their argumentation and reasoning skills. In addition, the seminars aim to encourage collaborative projects between participating universities. The theme of the doctoral course 2008 is 'Aim, structure and relevance of your thesis – methodological & argumentative skills'.

The course is free of charge and up to 12 PhD students will be accepted.

Application

In the selection of participants emphasis will be placed on the quality of the applications, suitability of the topic to the Nordcode context, and even distribution of participants between participating universities.

To apply for the course, PhD-students should submit a 3-4 page application covering:

- A description of the student's doctoral project, including objectives, schedule, supervision etc.
- A brief description of the applicant's motivation for attending the seminars
- An abstract for a working paper (Note: This abstract is for the Lund seminar and there is no need to re-submit it later).

Applications should be sent to professor Susann Vihma (University of Art and Design Helsinki) by email: susann.vihma@taik.fi

Deadline for applications is January 31st 2008. Notification of selections will be made by February 16th 2008.

Credits

To qualify for credits on the course participants must attend all three seminars and complete the assignments. Upon doing so NORDCODE will issue a certificate of participation. The seminar series is typically accounted as a doctoral course of 7,5 ECTS. However, students are advised to check with their home university as to ensure that the seminars will count as formal credits towards completion of their PhD-studies.

Seminars

The series will consist of three seminars:

- 1st doctoral seminar: Skövde (Sweden), April 9th- 11th.
- 2nd doctoral seminar: Lund (Sweden), May 28th- 30th (in connection to the 7th NORDCODE seminar & workshop).
- 3rd doctoral seminar: Oslo (Norway), preliminary dates: October 22nd-24th

Structure & Reading assignments

The seminars will consist of lectures and focused discussions on methods and theory in research on the communicative aspects of design. Focus will be on the Aim, Structure and Relevance of the participants Theses.

Participants are expected to prepare for each seminar through reading and writing assignments. Assignments and reading lists will be sent to participants in one month before each seminar.

Writing assignments

Much time will be devoted to the participants own texts. The ambition is that these will progress through the following steps:

For the Skövde seminar: Draft version of work-in-progress paper. Please, pay special attention to the research background (theoretical foundations, relevance, research question, and proposed method). Due March 18th.

For the Lund seminar: Finalised work-in-progress paper. Due April 30th.

For the Oslo seminar: Thesis-level writing (chapter or article). (Deadline to be announced in connection to the seminar in Lund).

In addition, participants are also expected to review and comment on texts written by peers. More detailed instructions will be given to participants.

Costs and Scholarships

Participation in the NORDCODE seminars is free of charge. Room and board in connection to the Skövde seminar will be covered by the University of Skövde and NORDCODE. However, participants are expected to cover their own room and board for the Lund and Oslo seminars.

If you for some reason cannot arrange the financing of your travel expenses through your home university, a limited number of NORDCODE Scholarships are available. To apply for a NORDCODE Scholarship, send a concise application (max 1 A4) to susann.vihma@taik.fi describing the situation and clearly motivating the relevance of your research to design research and the overall theme of the network. Applications for scholarships should be submitted together with the application to participate in the doctoral course, i.e. January 31st 2008.

About NORDCODE:

The Nordic network for research on communicative product design (NORDCODE) gathers together active researchers and doctoral students who work on:

- the communicative aspects of artefacts,
- aesthetic qualities of physical products and objects, and
- design processes related to the above.

More information about Nordcode and past activities of the network can be found on <http://nordcode.tkk.fi>

For more information about the seminars or the network, please consult the Nordcode webpage or contact:

susann.vihma@taik.fi
toni.karjalainen@tkk.fi