

Transferring Disciplines: A Framework for Interdisciplinary Graduate Education in Design Studies

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Abstract

In recent years, higher education has increasingly led to many contemporary challenges like technological changes and complex environmental transformations which cannot be analyzed through the viewpoint of a single discipline. These conditions have emphasized the importance of interdisciplinary approaches, especially in graduate education. In this case, transferring disciplines becomes an educational strategy that prepares future researchers and designers to navigate complexity and contribute to contemporary social and cultural challenges.

Collaborative environments will also encourage dialogue among different disciplinary backgrounds of design as a way of producing design knowledge. In this respect, ‘Design Studies Graduate Program’ is mainly created and positioned in Izmir University of Economics within this context to operate at the intersection point of art, science and design disciplines to create a unique environment where various perspectives produce knowledge converge.

In other words, ‘Design Studies Graduate Program’ mainly aims to create interdisciplinary knowledge which can be adapted and translated in new contexts for collaboration of unique methods, technologies and perspectives across disciplinary boundaries rather than considering disciplines as separate domains that occasionally collaborate.

This paper argues that interdisciplinary graduate education in design should not simply aim to combine disciplines, but rather to create spaces where knowledge can circulate, transform, and generate new perspectives. In this sense, as the head of this graduate program, with over a decade of experience and observations will be summarized. Consequently, this paper will propose a conceptual framework for creating a collaborative environment that supports disciplinary transfer as well as how to manage it for sustainable development on design education.

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