COURSE SYLLABUS

Course title:	Innovation Week
Semester:	WS 2026/27
ECTS:	5 ECTS

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Video:	**Basics of Design Thinking**
	https://www.invisionapp.com/films/design-disruptors
	(Validation Code: elevatedesign)
Language:	German (if needed English in the groups)

Learning Objectives

The goal of the 5-day interdisciplinary Design Thinking Workshop is to bring together students from various master's programs to work on real-world innovation projects from businesses. The Innovation Week follows the Design Thinking approach of the Stanford D.School, making the different phases of the process, from problem definition to prototype creation, come to life.

The core values of creative problem-solving (interdisciplinarity, iteration, user-focus, prototyping and testing, openness, and diverse perspectives) are experienced firsthand in cross-faculty teams, with guidance from professors and tutors at FH OÖ, who provide methods and expertise.

The aim is to help students understand the entire process, with all its challenges, and to equip them with the knowledge of processes and methods necessary to independently carry out innovative projects. During Innovation Week, students learn what it takes to develop practical, relevant solutions in creative, interdisciplinary teams and how to apply the methods needed for solution development.

Innovation Week differs from traditional course approaches in the following ways:

- Interdisciplinary, cross-faculty teams
- Real business challenges to solve
- Coaching and support from experts in different fields
- Creative space – Tabakfabrik Linz as an authentic environment

Teaching Concept

The entire project is supported by various methods during each phase. Depending on the task and the group's needs, different design research methods are used (e.g., Contextual Maps, qualitative question guides, observation, paper prototypes, stakeholder maps, etc.).

The course is structured as a Design Thinking (DT) workshop, where students primarily work in self-directed groups to develop solutions to problems. The instructors act as coaches, guiding and structuring the process, and supporting with their expertise and interventions.

Learning Content

Master's students will learn the tools they need to apply Design Thinking successfully and systematically find creative solutions. The course provides a foundation for answering the following questions:

- **Mindset**: What personal attitude is needed in Design Thinking projects, and how do the group members work together? What are the key elements of innovative processes?
- **Process**: What does the Design Thinking process look like? What is needed for it to be successful?
- **Methods**: What methods and tools are available for each phase? How can they be used effectively?
- **Solution Development**: When should I involve the client/company, and how can I best align the solutions with their needs?

Course Structure

1_Registration

Registration for Innovation Week is open on the FH Upper Austria website until December 13, 2026. In coordination with the program directors, the top applicants will be selected and notified of their nomination by December 23, 2026, at the latest. Final confirmation of participation must be given within the specified deadline; if there are cancellations, spots will be offered to those on the waiting list.

2_Preparation

Design Thinking Video
(Link see above)

3_Innovation Week

Day 1
Get Together, Warm-up
Introduction to Design Thinking

Design Challenge
Input: Understand
Group Activity: Contextual Maps, Super Hero
Input: Research & Exploration
Group Activity: Research Preparation
Optional: Briefing with Companies
Wrap-up

Day 1 begins with an official Get-Together, where teams are assigned, and tasks are distributed. Each day starts with a warm-up exercise to set the tone and ends with an evening wrap-up. The morning provides an introduction to Design Thinking (DT) or a refresher for participants, while in the afternoon, teams start working on their specific topics.

Day 2
Warm-up
Group Activity: Research & Exploration
Input: Define Phase
Group Activity: Personas, Customer Insights
Status Presentation
Reflection
Wrap-up

Day 2 focuses on research, including interviews with experts and clients, and time is allotted to research the client companies.

Day 3
Warm-up
Refocusing the Design Challenge
Group Activity: Research
Group Activity: Point of View (POV)
Input: Ideate
Group Activity: Ideation, Idea Gallery, Decision Matrix
Reflection
Wrap-up

Day 3 provides morning time for further research. In the afternoon, teams analyze their findings and refine the problem statement (POV).

Day 4
Warm-up
Status Presentation + Feedback
Input: Prototyping
Group Activity: Prototyping
Status Presentation + Feedback
Input: Testing & Pitching
Wrap-up

On Day 4, teams generate ideas and begin building prototypes.

Day 5
Warm-up
Group Activity: Testing & Pitching
Practice Pitch
Final Presentation

On the morning of Day 5, teams test their prototypes, finalize concepts, and prepare presentations. The afternoon is dedicated to the final presentation, which will be given to company representatives.

4_Follow Up

Submission of a project report which, together with the final presentation, is used as the basis for assessment and crediting of the course.

Prerequisites and Preparatory Work

No specific prior knowledge is required; the course begins with the basics of Design Thinking and innovation.

Assessment

Assessment is group-based and is determined by the final presentation (30%) and the project report (70%).

Attendance

Full attendance is mandatory. Any planned absences must be coordinated in advance with the course instructor, and any unplanned absences due to illness must be justified with a medical certificate; otherwise, the absence is considered unexcused. To receive a passing grade, students must attend at least 80% of the course. If attendance falls below 80%, the course will not be graded, and no compensatory options are available in this format.

Location

The course will take place at Factory 300 in the Tabakfabrik Linz. For Innovation Week, students are provided with a dedicated workspace at Factory 300, available 24/7. Each team will be guided by a coach (course instructor) throughout the week.

Accreditation

A maximum of 5 ECTS credits can be awarded for this course within the respective master's program. Participants of Innovation Week will receive a certificate of participation. Based on this certificate, credits will be allocated according to the approved ECTS points, which may vary by program. Credit recognition should be coordinated directly with the study program director.