Course Description
This course aims to provide engineering students with the opportunity to study human-centered design methods and ethics in the context of Jordan. Students collaborate with local NGOs and community members to interview, research, assess needs, and identify a local engineering problem. While Jordan has been developing innovative approaches to water shortage, storage and supply, organic farming, food security, and sustainable energy production, the country still faces increased water needs from climate change and a growing population including refugees. Design and Innovation in the Social Domain seminar brings students and local communities together in collaborative and hands-on designs to identify an existing problem, and engineer a concept idea that can be developed into a design project and eventually a prototype. Students will think through engineering solutions to existing problems in water and renewable energy in arid environments, food design or sustainable organic farming. The aim is for students to weave emergent thinking into a design innovation, prototype a solution when they are back at their school, and eventually share the solution with the community it was designed for.

Learning Outcomes
The Design and Innovation in the Social Domain course comprises 45 class hours of instruction (3 credits). Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify an existing engineering problem and formulate the problem into design goals;
- Demonstrate the capacity to assess community needs in the context of Jordan and engineer possible solutions to existing problems;
- Analyze, compare, and evaluate alternative engineering designs to existing problems;
- Develop and assess concept selection in observance of local ethics and value systems;
- Process background research for an engineering concept design and delineate ethical standards for implementation;

Language of Instruction
This course is taught in English, but students will be exposed to vocabulary related to course content as well as the nuances of economic change and development through in-country expert lectures and field visits in a wide range of venues and regional locales.

**Course Requirements**

**Course Schedule**

*Please be aware that topics and excursions may vary to take advantage of any emerging events, to accommodate changes in our lecturers’ availability, and to respect any changes that would affect student safety. Students will be notified if this occurs.*

**Module 1: Human-Centered Design in the Context of Jordan**

This module introduces human-centered design and the goals of interaction in design selection and implementation. The module also introduces the ethics of interaction in the cultural environment in Jordan and the value systems of Bedouin and refugee population.

**Topics include:**

- Human-Centered Design: Definition, Approaches, and Challenges
- Water resources and sustainability in Jordan
- Water shortage and renewable Energy in Arid Environments
- Meeting with a Local Designer: Sahar Madanat (www.saharmadanat.com)

**Excursions:**

- Royal Botanic Garden (water resource management)
- King Talal Dam (the biggest Dam in Jordan, collects around 60 million cubic meters used in Agriculture)
- Wadi Araba and Jordan Valley (water justice)

**Readings:**


**Module 2: Engineering Water in Jordan**

This module focuses on the innovative methods in the design, harvesting, and conservation of water in Jordan. The module combines lectures by experts and field visits to water innovation projects.

**Topics include:**

- Rain Harvesting System Design and Construction: Pilot Projects
- Water Conservation and Management in Arid and Semi-Arid Regions: Al-Azraq oasis project
- Low-Cost Eco-Bio Technological Methods for the Purification and Reuse of Domestic Wastewater
- Gray Water Reuse for Green Refugee Camps
- Water Tank Design
Excursions:
- Al Baqaa Palestinian camp
- Dana nature reserve
- Ancient Water harvesting System (Petra)
- Wadi Rum community farmers (small scale farmers) and visit Disi project

Module 3: Human-Centered Design in the Context of Humanitarian Crisis
This module addresses the principles, rights, and duties governing humanitarian action as set out in the humanitarian charter. The module examines the major sectors of humanitarian response and looks into humanitarian innovation in each sector.

Topics include:
- Introduction to Refugee Humanitarian Action
- Humanitarian Innovation and Water Supply, Sanitation, and Hygiene
- Humanitarian Innovation in the Sector of Shelter and Settlement
- Collaboration, Intervention, and Resilience in the Context of Displaced Populations
- Human-Centered Design Workshop: Engineering Practical Solutions

Reading:

Module 4: The Ethics of Interaction with Vulnerable Populations
This module addresses the methodological and ethical challenges and considerations in social science research on vulnerable populations with special focus on refugees and displaced populations. The module explores the cultural and social norms that should be considered when interacting with or interviewing refugees.

Topics include:
- Methodological and Ethical Consideration of Interaction with Vulnerable Populations
- Structured and Semi-Structured Interviewing with Rural Populations
- Interacting with Refugee Populations
- Ethics and Gender-Related Vulnerabilities

Readings:

Module 5: Needs Assessment in the Context of Jordan
Students work with local community members to complete a needs assessment of community engineering challenges. Through this process students and community members collaborate on: identifying concerns, determining measurable indicators, gathering data to define needs, identifying and analyzing causes, and identifying possible solutions.

Topics include:
- Cultural Probes: Qualitative Contextual Design Research
- Ethnological Methods
- Participatory Co-Design Workshop
- Design Ethnography

Videos:

Online Resources:

Evaluation and Grading Criteria

Description of Assignments:
1. Cultural Probes assignments: Cultural Probes are used to gain insight into and inspirational responses about the daily life and habits of communities. Students are given probes along with tasks to allow them to record specific events, feelings, or interactions.
2. Sketching exercises (20%): each week, the class will be given a theme or a specific design problem to tackle for which each student will draft sketches of design solutions related to that topic. Drawing skills are not being evaluated; these exercises are intended to help students develop facility in ideation and visually communicating ideas. Creativity is encouraged.
3. Human-centered Design exercises (30%): to give students practice with specific methods for interaction design, two small individual assignments will be completed over the course of the semester. Design will be paper prototype of digital.
4. Background research for design project: students carry out background research for the engineering concept design for their design project and delineate ethical standards for its implementation
5. Participation: students are expected to prepare for classes, attend and participate in class discussions, field activities, and carry out all assignments and other activities prepared in the context of the seminar.

Assessment:
Cultural Probes assignments 20%
Sketching exercises 20%
Human-Centered Design exercises 30%
Background research for design project 20%
Participation 10%

Grading Scale
94-100%  A  Excellent
90-93%    A-  
87-89%    B+  Above Average
84-86%    B  Above Average
80-83%    B-  
77-79%    C+  
74-76%    C  Average
70-73%    C-  
67-69%    D+  
64-66%    D  Below Average
below 64  F  Fail

Expectations and Policies

- Show up prepared. Be on time, have your readings completed and points in mind for discussion or clarification. Complying with these elements raises the level of class discussion for everyone.
- Have assignments completed on schedule, printed, and done accordingly to the specified requirements. This will help ensure that your assignments are returned in a timely manner.
- Ask questions in class. Engage the lecturer. These are often very busy professionals who are doing us an honor by coming to speak….
- Comply with academic integrity policies (no plagiarism or cheating, nothing unethical).
- Respect differences of opinion (classmates’, lecturers, local constituents engaged with on the visits). You are not expected to agree with everything you hear, but you are expected to listen across difference and consider other perspectives with respect.

Please refer to the SIT Study Abroad Student Handbook for policies on academic integrity, ethics, warning and probation, diversity and disability, sexual harassment, and the academic appeals process.

Disability Services: Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services at disabilityservices@sit.edu for information and support in facilitating an accessible educational experience. Additional information regarding SIT Disability Services, including a link to the online request form, can be found on the Disability Services website at http://studyabroad.sit.edu/disabilityservices.