The field of Creative Industries represents an innovative paradigm for our contemporary knowledge-based society, closely associated with recent trends in cultural activities, digital technologies, and sustainable urban development.

The University of Saint Joseph is a leading international university in China’s Special Administrative Region (SAR) of Macau, where the creative and cultural industries are acknowledged as a strategic area for the development of a vibrant and pioneering cluster of businesses and entrepreneurs. Created in 2012, the new Faculty of Creative Industries integrates some of the most successful programs of our university, ranging from the most traditional subsectors of the Creative Industries, such as Design, Architecture, and Communication & Media, to new fields of study that increasingly converge on the creative domain, such as Information Systems and Environment & Urban Development.

Some of our programs, such as Architecture, are unique within the higher education system of Macau, but above all, the integration of each these areas within the same faculty provides a unique multidisciplinary community in which students have access to exceptional education opportunities and a work environment that allows them to extend their abilities to the utmost.

With our community of students and academic staff, sited within the exponentially growing entertainment and business environment of Macau, USJ is rapidly becoming a leading university in the field of Creative Industries in East Asia.
INTRODUCTION

Having been open for several successful years, the USJ design program is now undergoing a process of recalibration and revision in order to bring it more closely in alignment with international standards, and to simultaneously make it more relevant to our location in the world. As Macau completes its shift from a manufacturing-based economy to an almost entirely service-based economy, it is the design disciplines – in particular, graphic, product, interior, and interaction – that become central to the city’s ongoing economic diversification. Adjacent to the manufacturing zones of South China and the Pearl River Delta (the “factory of the world”) Macau is ideally positioned to develop the intellectual and creative capital for radically new types of design. Every generation faces challenges specific to its time and place. The contemporary world, and the Pearl River Delta region in particular, is undergoing rapid changes due to urbanization and industrialization, giving rise to increasing interdependence between cities, climates, cultures, and resources. Technology provides the means to intervene, but it is design that gives shape, coherence, and comprehensibility to the material world. Design education is increasingly a collective endeavor. Teachers and students should become collaborators in developing innovative responses to wider technological advances and sociological shifts. Interdisciplinary projects among the various university faculties, as well as partnerships between university and industry, are the new drivers of innovation. The USJ design curriculum requires students to constantly evaluate the consequences of their work for society and the natural world. This is a shift from thinking about applications to thinking about implications, and entails conceiving new roles, contexts and methods for design. Beyond instructing students in the history of design and its associated techniques, the university should provide space and time for reflection and experimentation – a platform from which to postulate alternatives, to develop unprecedented solutions to current problems, and responses to as-yet unknown ones. This puts us in the paradoxical position of preparing students to do things that have never been done before. It is an important time for design education, requiring that students focus their talents not merely on form and function, as in the past, but on the connections between design and society, and the potential for using design as means to trigger wider transformations. As the world changes, so too does the role of the designer.
This studio was developed as a design studio and fabrication lab. Students engaged in an intense iterative design process, performing all steps from concept through to sketching, model-making, 3D rendering, 3D printing, technical drawings, building plans, and fabrication of a prototype. The main assignment was The Stool: a project to design and build an essential seating device, simultaneously utilitarian and desirable, an icon able to enhance the surrounding environment. Students were challenged to rethink the form, function and perception of the Stool from a contemporary perspective, and to propose original concepts. Central to this project was the exploration of new design possibilities for informal seating as a strategy for expanding its role and relevance in contemporary daily life.
The portfolio is a synthesis of all topics areas within the program (design, technology, history & theory, communication) and is intended as a holistic means of assessing student achievements. It is the single most important document for demonstrating the quality, competency, and interests of an individual designer. Final-year students were required to prepare and present their portfolios verbally and visually. This was a test of their ability to consciously determine a direction for their work, and assume responsibility for their continuing education.
This studio focused on the relationships between interior spaces, furnishings, and human occupants, providing a fundamental understanding of the importance of ergonomic scale, space allocation, and furnishing placement. Materials and colors were also examined, together with floor, wall, window, and ceiling treatments. Students examined the “microenvironments” of integrated resorts, specifically the spaces of the casino, restaurant, and hotel. A similar process of analysis was applied to the perceived relationships between guests and furnishings that define the “microevents” in these interior environments. Based on their analyses of room layout, furniture sizes, and circulation routes, students were asked to create a solid geometric module, scaled to a particular size, which was then clustered or “packed” to create an interior space. The individual forms could be placed at any angle in any combination, but always at the same size, to “build” an interior space. The emphasis was on the hybridity of the larger forms and spaces made from a single, small module.
In April 2014, a group of USJ Design students travelled to Guangdong for a one-week long workshop at Guang Dong Industrial Design Institute (GDIDI). Organized as part of the second-year design studio, this was a fabrication workshop in which students attended tutorials on different production methods and developed the fabrication skills necessary to produce their prototypes.
In April 2013, four students from the USJ design program won awards in the Skoda "Clever Together Project". First Prize (a three-month internship at Skoda Headquarters in Prague, Czechoslovakia) was won by Theresa Lam. Students Jansky Lei Chi Hou and Belle Lao Pui I shared second prize, and Cintia Lo won third prize. The competition themes were "car solutions", "customer service solutions" and "merchandising solutions".
USJ design students have access to a wide range of material and equipment. In addition to the main studio spaces, there is a workshop with various tools for building models and full-scale mockups. The university library holds a good selection of design books. New iMac computers are provided in the computer lab, each of which is installed with the essential software applications for 2D and 3D design, including Adobe Creative Suite, AutoCAD, and Rhino. The fabrication studio contains state-of-the-art equipment for model making and rapid prototyping, including an Epilog Fusion 32 laser cutter, a Roland GX-24 vinyl cutter, and a ProJet 160 3D printer. The IT support team is available to provide tutorials and technical support.
USJ will soon move into a new campus, which is currently under construction in the Ilha Verde district. Designed by renowned Japanese architect Koji Yagi and executed by local office MPS, the campus will be a showcase of sustainable architecture. Based on sustainable building principles intended to minimize wastage and energy consumption, the campus technology comprises a mixture of passive systems (rainwater harvesting and recycling, ledger green strips and fins, roof gardens, low-transmission glazing) and active systems (solar panels, energy recovery in ventilation and chiller ducts, low-consumption LED lighting). It will be an inspiring location for the education of the next generation of Macau designers.
TEACHING STAFF

FULL-TIME

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// DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

THOMAS DANIELL
// HEAD OF ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

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// SENIOR LECTURER

PART-TIME

MIGUEL AUGUSTO

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TOMÉ QUADROS

JOÃO SEABRA

NUNO SOARES

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JOSÉ MANUEL SIMÕES

JAN STAEL VON HOLSTEIN

VÍTOR TEIXEIRA

NAOKI TERADA

DAVID WICKS
The USJ Bachelor of Design and Master of Design degrees enable students to develop the creative abilities and technical skills necessary to become effective and respected professionals in Macau and the wider world. Addressing the full spectrum of relevant technological, economic, environmental, social, theoretical, and historical issues, the curriculum emphasizes ethics as well as expertise, requiring students to constantly evaluate the consequences of their work on the human environment and the natural world. Founded on an appreciation of the importance of sustainability and resource conservation, the courses incorporate a wide range of approaches and techniques, with a particular focus on graphic design, product design, and interior design. The courses are taught by a mixture of local faculty members and visiting professors. All of them are internationally recognized professionals, thereby providing students with the opportunity to develop design skills for a global context.