This is a new course designed to integrate interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation practices with CED’s design theory and process expertise. Design is being understood as useful in contexts other than the traditional object-oriented design professions. Many disciplines are interested in learning about design thinking and how to deploy design methods to solve an ever-widening range of complex problems. The term “wicked problems,” coined by CED professor Horst Rittel in the 1970’s, characterizes this type of complexity.

Successful high-level solutions to complex problems requires design thinking, system thinking and critical thinking. They also require effective innovation and collaboration skills. This course will expose students to integrated skills and tools and thinking models. It will take place in the newly-established Cal Design Lab at Wurster. ARCH 298 is a think/do course in which ideas and processes are introduced then practiced. The course content is integrated with a related course, “Problem Finding/Problem Solving” also being introduced this Fall in the Haas School of Business. This integration will allow students from different schools to work together on interdisciplinary problems and teams. It is envisioned that these courses and their attendant practices will become the baseline “lingua franca” of interdisciplinary project work in the campus network of Design Labs.

The course is project-based and will integrate talks/readings/exercises with projects/practices. Students will work on interdisciplinary projects. Drawing from disciplines across the campus, this is the entry-level course for access to the Cal Design Lab at Wurster. This course is part of the ongoing development of practices and culture of interdisciplinary collaborative work with the network of innovation and design centers on campus.