HAWORTH

Timeless Innovation: The History and Legacy of Modern Italian Design

Course Title

Timeless Innovation: The History and Legacy of Modern Italian Design

Course Numbers

AIA Course #: HAW-2800 – 1 LU / Elective
Project Planning & Design / Building Design

IDCEC Course #: CEU-125167 HSW 1 LU / Basic
Subject Code: 3. Interior Design Education / 1. Instruction

Course Description

Explore the rich legacy of modern Italian design from the early 20th century to today. This CEU examines the historical foundations, cultural influences, and design philosophies that shaped modern Italian design and continue to influence contemporary design worldwide. Featuring renowned brands such as Cassina, Cappellini, Zanotta, and Poltrona Frau, the course highlights how their contributions continue to influence global design trends. Attendees will gain insight into the evolution of Italian design through craftsmanship, material innovation, and collaboration with visionary designers and architects.

The course connects enduring Italian design principles, such as beauty, balance, and material excellence, with the needs of contemporary environments.

Objectives

1. Analyze the cultural, social, and economic forces shaping Italian design from the early 20th century to the present and explain how pioneers such as Franco Albini established foundational principles of modern Italian design, including rationalism, material honesty, and human-centered thinking.

2. Identify key milestones and innovations in modern Italian furniture design, and describe how experimentation with materials, form, and production methods contributed to the evolution of contemporary design practices.

3. Examine the role of collaboration between designers, architects, and manufacturers—including Cassina, Cappellini, Poltrona Frau, and Zanotta—and assess how these partnerships transformed design concepts into enduring, globally influential products.

4. Apply core Italian design philosophies—such as material honesty, emotional resonance, and timeless elegance—to develop actionable strategies for creating office environments that balance aesthetics, performance, and human well-being.

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