

Examining Software Design from a General Design Perspective

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Abstract: Our community's understanding of software design has certainly improved over the years, as have our approaches and our ability to design high-quality software. But compared to other design disciplines, the software design field is unable to objectively answer some fundamental questions about where it stands. Through a new, interdisciplinary framework, we place software design in a general design perspective, examine existing conceptual points of view and technical contributions, and suggest promising research directions. In so doing, we learn that we can and must treat software design as an inherent design discipline, that the field's successes to date have been in line with such a view, and that the framework can serve as a basis for engaging in the discussion necessary to answer the questions that have remained elusive to date.