HDCC201 Capstone Proposal through Design Thinking Fall 2021

Instructional Team
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Teaching Assistants: Hannah Wandersman & Tiffany Yen (Section 0101)
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Proposed definition of "design thinking" for the purposes of this course:

> *breaking down a process of creative inquiry into discrete phases of activity which can be observed, nuanced, and refined through practice; a design thinking process involves iteration (rehearsals, drafts, prototypes, sketches, etc.), process documentation, feedback, and reflection.*

The purpose of this 1 credit course in your DCC Honors curriculum is to guide you through the process of envisioning, elaborating, and crafting a written proposal for your Capstone project, which you will complete and share in the Spring semester, under the auspices of the HDCC209 course. The subject material of your Capstone projects is open to your imagination, which can be both enlivening and challenging. *We ask that you engage the questions, themes, techniques and provocations from your DCC coursework that most spark your curiosity and care, in order to bring a vision into reality; we invite you to use DCC's community, connections, and resources as a container to incubate your efforts; and we encourage you to imagine how the compelling forces of your project will ripple outward into your other realms of experience.* A successful project is one that gives you the opportunity to learn how your interests and investments come into contact with the world as it stands, and how your pursuits can contribute to creating the world you want to live in. Throughout the course, you will develop, incubate, and design your project idea through creative exercises, peer feedback, and writing assignments. At the end of the semester, you will submit a Capstone Proposal, which will serve as your anchor and guide as you complete your project next semester.

Proceeding through this course may feel a bit like patting your head and rubbing your belly at the same time, because we are aiming to coordinate two different learning objectives simultaneously. With one hand, we are moving through a design thinking process in order to develop our Capstone project ideas; and with the other hand, we are learning how to communicate the vision of our project via a formal proposal. This kind of paired processing is something you have likely already encountered in your life, and which you will likely continue to encounter. In many sectors and fields, in applications, grant proposals, etcetera, you may be tasked with communicating a creative vision/plan for a project in order to carry out the project itself. This course maps a process of ideation, research, description, and revision/reflection as an approach to this nature of challenge; it is also an exercise in bringing our ideas into language, using the rhetorical form of the Capstone Proposal.

INTENTIONS & EXPECTATIONS

Learning Goals:
- To create and propose a Capstone Project, inspired by and/or relating to your DCC coursework
- To practice design thinking strategies for project ideation and proposal writing
- To understand the different elements of the project proposal genre
- To cultivate a generous and generative culture of peer feedback
- To deepen and enhance awareness of your own creative process

Please keep in mind that this is a 1 credit course, meaning you are expected to dedicate up to 3 hours per week to your work, including time spent in synchronous meetings and completing assignments. If it is your pleasure and delight to spend more time than that on any of the weekly modules and assignments, that is most welcome; however, it is not expected of you. If you find yourself spending more than 3 hours per week on the course modules and assignments (and do not want to), please reach out to your instructor for guidance and/or accommodation.

A bit about your instructor:
> I am an artist and educator and Graduate Assistant for DCC at UMD, currently pursuing a PhD in the Harriet Tubman Department of Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies. I consider how art might serve as a research and learning strategy for making meaningful, ethical relations with each other and the planet. My dissertation project, *Art for Other Possible Worlds,* materializes as a resource to build capacity, skills, and techniques for imagining collective justice and creating cultures of care. I am certified in Permaculture Design, hold an MFA in Performance & Interactive Media Art, serve as guardian to a very good dog, and love learning.

The design and facilitation of this course is informed by my trainings and experiences in art, research, writing, and design; in the spirit of interdisciplinarity that necessarily animates work in DCC, I invite you to allow your creative/technical/embodied/social practices and experiences to inform your work throughout the semester.

COURSE STRUCTURE & ASSIGNMENTS OVERVIEW
- Completion of 5 drafts, a Process Reflection, and a Capstone Project Proposal
- Completion of weekly practice modules
- Completion of a one-on-one 15 minute project meeting with your instructor

Drafts (Units of Practice) & Weekly Modules
The course is organized into five units of practice. Units are designed to guide students through the different sections of the Capstone Proposal, and follow a three-week long sequence:
- Week One is an asynchronous module with an online video presentation and a creative exercise which get us thinking about a Proposal Group (several connected sections of the Capstone Proposal).
- Week Two is a synchronous online meeting with your TA and section cohort to collectively brainstorm, give feedback and support for each other's ideas, and learn from

each other's processes. TAs will circulate an asynchronous companion for anyone who cannot join the synchronous meeting to participate in the week's activities.
- Week Three includes a demo or skill share from the instructional team, and gives you a prompt for an offline partnered activity to do with a member of your section cohort. Partners will be randomly assigned and changed each unit.

Modules for weeks One and Three will be posted to ELMS by 5pm on Mondays, to be completed by 11:59pm on Sunday of the same week. TAs will determine and communicate to their sections when they will share their asynchronous companions to the synchronous meetings.

Each unit culminates in the submission of a draft, which can take one of two forms: a written draft of a Proposal Group; or a process zine (for which there will be a demo in week 3). You can choose your own adventure for each unit -- both options are geared towards providing you with a substantive set of materials for completing your Capstone Proposal at the end of the semester.
- *Draft* draws our attention to the form of the final assignment, a written Capstone Proposal. As each unit gives creative exercises and activities to help you think about a particular grouping of sections in the Capstone Proposal, you will submit a first draft of those sections. If you choose to do a draft for each unit, you will have a fully complete first draft of the Capstone Proposal by the end of the weekly modules.
- A process zine allows for a creative synthesis of the activities over the three weeks of the unit, and may take a variety of forms. Sometimes in order to get to language, we need to use other means -- sketching, dancing, walking, tinkering, divining, etc. If it is advantageous for your process work in a different mode of iteration than writing, you may submit a zine which curates your creative work over the course of the unit.

Capstone Proposal & Process Reflection
Your final submissions will be a complete Capstone Proposal and a Process Reflection
- Click here to view and download the Capstone Proposal Template

The Process Reflection is a 500-1200 word personal statement looking back at your creative process over the course of the semester and sharing things you noticed, learned, enjoyed, struggled with, etc., and lessons or practices you want to take with you into the future.

One-on-one instructor meetings
I will be available for 15 minute meetings to discuss your projects during my virtual office hours, Tuesdays from 2pm-5pm and Thursdays from 12pm-3pm. **All students are required to have at least one meeting with me over the course of the semester.**
- Click here to sign up for a meeting via calendly.com/epeskin

If the timing of my office hours does not work with your schedule, please contact me at epeskin@umd.edu to find a mutually convenient time.

GRADING SCHEME

Your grade in this course consists of 2 components: Engagement (50%) and Assignments (50%). Your Engagement grade is based on your completion of the weekly modules. You will receive 1 point for each module you complete, for a total of 15 points. You will receive 2 points for each completed assignment, with the exception of the one-on-one meeting with your instructor, which is weighted at 1 point, for a total of 15 points.

All assignments will be graded for completion only. My goal is for all students to succeed in this course. The class is organized to encourage the imagination of a project that is interesting and satisfying and important to you, that you are excited to spend the second semester of this academic year completing. We focus on process, rather than outcome, in order to challenge paradigms of assessment which evaluate our creative work as right/wrong or good/bad, or along a spectrum of numerically quantifiable achievement. You will receive written and/or verbal feedback from your instructional team on the work you submit, but the value of your work does not accord with how well you might have met my expectations; rather, it matters in terms of how it has helped, challenged, and changed you. In other words, I am not the authority on your learning; you are. To say that your assignments are assessed "for completion" means that I assume your work has already been subject to your own criteria of evaluation, and so you will receive full credit for whatever you submit. Below, I lay out my basic criteria for evaluation, if they are helpful as you formulate your own.

ENGAGEMENT OVERVIEW
15 weekly online modules - 10 asynchronous, 5 synchronous; 1 point each

ASSIGNMENTS OVERVIEW
Draft 1: Process zine OR Proposal Group 1: Introduction, Expertise & Skills, Project Description (2 points)
Draft 2: Process zine OR Proposal Group 2: History, Approach & Methods, Significance & Distinction, Audience (2 points)
Draft 3: Process zine OR Proposal Group 3: Timeline, Budget, Outcomes/Impact (2 points)
Draft 4: Process zine OR Proposal Group 4: Abstract, Bibliography (2 points)
Draft 5: Process zine OR Revised Proposal Groups 1-3 (2 points)
Capstone Proposal (2 points)
Process Reflection (2 points)
Instructor one-on-one meeting (1 point)

SUGGESTED RUBRIC FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS
As you prepare your materials for submission, keep in mind these guidelines:

DO	*DON'T*
• Spend time on something you care about • Take responsibility for what you are learning and finding meaningful in this process • Communicate your intentions as best you are able, with the materials most readily available to you	Prioritize this class' responsibilities over your own health and safety (physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually)

Submit what best represents your learning process and creative engagement at the time the assignment is due, as best you are able. If you encounter barriers to completing the course materials according to the course schedule, please let me know and we can make alternative arrangements.

Course Policies

** By marking as complete the Week 01 Module, you are acknowledging that you have read and understand all syllabus content and course policies. For university policies, please see the Office of Undergraduate Studies' page: [Course Related Policies for Undergraduate Students](). **

A note on accommodations: At no time will you be required to present a doctor's note or official documentation to prove that you need accommodations for your learning. All that is required is that you let me know that you need them. Furthermore, as our understanding of COVID-19 and its effects on our lives continues to change, we must be flexible with ourselves and each other. This course has been designed to provide structure and support while making space for the uncertainty we are all experiencing. As your instructor, my responsibilities are to create a supportive learning environment and to navigate University compliance as your advocate. If circumstances change, I promise to respond to your needs as best I am able. As students, your responsibilities are to have a learning experience and to take care of yourselves as best you are able. Please let me know if you encounter obstacles to your responsibilities, and I promise to do my best to make necessary changes/offer alternatives.

Classroom Climate: I am committed to maintaining a classroom and learning environment that encourages the equitable participation of all students and attends to our diverse and varied backgrounds and identities, including issues related to age, ability, ethnicity, gender, national origin, race, religion, and sexual orientation. Abusive and/or derogatory conduct will not be tolerated.

Late Work: Late work policies are tailored to individual needs. Please communicate with your TAs and your Instructor if you need more time to complete assignments.

Communication with Instructor: If you would like to contact me, you can sign up for a meeting with me in my virtual office hours at calendly.com/epeskin; you can send me a message via Canvas; or you can email me at epeskin@umd. I will do my best to respond in a timely manner. I will also monitor the [Capstone Q&A Board]() if you prefer to post your question there. Your section TAs will let you know their preferences for communication in your first meeting with them.

Academic Integrity: The University of Maryland has established various codes of conduct through the Office of Student Conduct, which is part of the Division of Student Affairs. As a student, you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important that you be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. [For details, please see the Office of Student Conduct's page on academic integrity](). If you are ever uncertain about your need to cite something or how to use various sources in your assignments, please contact the instructor before turning in your work.

Institutional Accommodations: UMD is committed to providing accommodations for students with disabilities, and DCC is additionally committed to effectively facilitating learning accommodations for all students, whether you have an institutionally-recognized and/or documented disability or not. Students with documentation should inform their instructors within the add-drop period and arrange one-on-one time to discuss the proper delivery of accommodations. Students without documentation are likewise encouraged to discuss their needs, however varied, with their instructor as soon as possible. If you are interested in obtaining official documentation via the university, please contact the Accessibility and Disability Service (ADS), a division of the University Counseling Center via 301-314-7682, adsfrontdesk@umd.edu, or visit the Shoemaker Building for more information.

Copyright: All class materials are subject to copyright restrictions and may not be reproduced for anything other than personal use without written permission from the instructor. Please note that these restrictions apply to all social media, digital, and other platforms.

Syllabus Subject to Change: This syllabus is subject to change at any time according to the instructor's discretion. All changes will be communicated to students in a prompt and efficient manner via email and/or Canvas, so please ensure that you are checking both outlets with regular frequency.