GRA43816C / Design Thinking / Fall 24 Syllabus

Meets

M/W 11-E1 (6:15PM-8:10PM) FAC 310

Instructor

David Clulow (He/Him) │ dclulow@ufl.edu

www.djc.earth

Office hours

Zoom Mondays / 10 - 11 https://ufl.zoom.us/j/5524693051

I respond to email in the morning M-F. I'm happy to make appointments to meet outside of office hours. Email me to find a time. I'm always open to questions and hearing your ideas—let's have honest, respectful conversations to help you meet your goals.

Overview:

Design Thinking is a reflective and dynamic process that emphasizes empathy, creativity, and collaboration. In this course, students will explore the principles of Design Thinking through a hands-on, studio-based approach that encourages deep engagement with both the process and the people involved. This course is not about the final product, but about developing a nuanced understanding of design as a human-centered, context-aware, and iterative practice.

Students will begin by critically examining the foundations of Design Thinking, including its methods, evolution, and critiques. Through collaborative projects, they will practice empathy by deeply engaging with peers to uncover and define real-world challenges. Students will then ideate, prototype, and test solutions, learning to iterate based on feedback and reflection. Throughout the course, there will be a strong emphasis on understanding positionality—recognizing that all design is influenced by the unique perspectives and backgrounds of the designers.

Key activities will include reading, discussion, interviews, prototyping, and reflection. Core concepts such as empathy, curiosity, imagination, and observation will be central to the learning process. The studio environment will foster continuous learning through reviews, presentations, and feedback sessions. By the end of the course, students will have developed both a critical understanding of Design Thinking and practical experience in using it to try and understand complex problems.

Course Objectives

At the end of this course students will be able to:

- **Understand:** Develop a critical understanding of Design Thinking, including its principles, methods, and critiques, with an emphasis on empathy, collaboration, and positionality.
- **Experience:** Gain hands-on experience in identifying, defining, and taking on real-world design challenges through iterative processes, including ideation, prototyping, and testing.
- **Reflect:** Enhance reflective practice by synthesizing learning experiences into thoughtful critiques and applications of Design Thinking in diverse contexts.

Course Structure

This course is composed of 3 projects and 1 case study where we will bring everything together and reflect on our process.

Weekly Reflections: The course will also include weekly reflections in the form of written and visual notebooks. These will be worth 1 point each and contribute to 15% of the final grade.

Grade breakdown:

- Project 1 - 20%
- Project 2 - 30%
- Project 3 - 30%
- Case Study - 5%
- Reflection - 15%

Grading

The grading scale for this course is consistent with the current UF policy for assigning grade points which can be viewed at https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx.

Letter	GPA	Percent	Course Points	Letter	GPA	Percent	Course Points
A	4.00	100-94	1000-950	C	2.00	76-73	769-730
A-	3.67	93-90	949-900	C-	1.67	72-70	729-700
B+	3.33	89-87	899-870	D+	1.33	69-67	699-670
B	3.00	86-83	869-830	D	1.00	66-63	669-630
B-	2.67	82-80	829-800	D-	0.67	62-60	629-600
C+	2.33	79-77	799-770	F	0.00	≤ 59	≤ 599

Project grades will reflect final deadlines for projects but also for meeting each deadline along the way. Life happens, if there are circumstances which will prevent you from submitting final work on time please contact me to discuss plans for an altered timeline.

General Conduct

We are trying to create an open space to discuss issues and topics that matter to each of us individually, and collectively, as people and as designers. We may not always hold each other's views, but we must always hold each other with respect. If you have an issue with or are offended by a certain comment or topic, please come to me and we will work it out together.

Materials & Devices

In order for you to fully participate and meet course learning objectives, students taking graphic design courses are required to have appropriate hardware, software and access to the Internet. See this website for more details regarding hardware, software, specifications, and some purchasing options, including discounts for UF students.

Because computer access is an institutional requirement, computer costs are designated as allowable costs for students who qualify for Financial Aid. Accordingly, Student Financial Affairs has added costs for access to a computer into budgets. For more information, contact your financial adviser in the Office of Student Financial Affairs directly.

- Adobe Creative Cloud Suite (UF Student Discount available)
- Laptop that meets the requirements on the SA+AH tech requirements page.
- Webcam (should already be pre-installed on your computer, if not get an external webcam) There is a classroom printer which is available for classwork only.

Texts & References

There are no required texts for this course. All assigned readings will be provided to you through Canvas.

Platforms

You will all be required to set up and have immediate access to these platforms during the semester:

- **Canvas:** For storing the syllabus, assignments, maintaining student grades, and primary channel for communication.
- **Miro:** For collaborative work and critiques.

Video Policy

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. *Some lectures from either the instructor or guest speakers may not be recorded at the discretion of the speaker.*

A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instruc tor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To "publish" means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student

Course policies:

Attendance: Being present for class allows you to participate in credit-earning, in-class activities and complete required assignments; more importantly, your contributions to discussions and peer review sessions facilitate an engaged learning community. After the first two absences, each additional unexcused absence will reduce the final course grade by 5/100 points, or half a letter grade. Unless you check in via email **ahead of time** to make specific and mutually agreeable arrangements, official documentation of university-approved circumstances (illness, military service, university travel, religious observances, etc.) is required for absences to be excused. Two late arrivals or early departures equal one absence. More than six absences results in automatic failure of the course, unless we've made arrangements ahead of time to accommodate ongoing, documented situations.

Students Requiring Accommodation: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/ It's important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester. If there's something I/we can do that you know to be helpful and functional for you, feel free to **let me know** informally.

Make-up work: Presentations and in-class activities can only be made up in the case of documented emergencies or for university approved reasons such as military/university travel, illness, or religious observances; contact me ahead of time to make arrangements. Read the full university policies regarding attendance, excused absences, and make-up exams at:

https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

Academic integrity: If you use words, images, or ideas that are not your own, **cite them**. This includes the use of AI text and image generators. Claiming the work of others (including AI) as your own is a serious breach of professional ethics and will result in a failing grade in this class. The UF Honor Code specifies a number of other behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. View the Honor Code online: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/

Course evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last 2-3 weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/.

UF in-class recording policy: Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject,

including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor. A class lecture does not include lab/studio sessions, student presentations, academic exercises involving solely student participation, or private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

UF guidance on engaging uncomfortable ideas: People learn best when encouraged to ask questions and express diverse insights on course content which may include images, texts, data, or theories from many fields. This class addresses concepts of race, color, sex, gender, and/or national origin as related to design. We study these important issues because understanding them is essential for anyone who seeks to make economic, cultural, and societal contributions to today's complex world. With this in mind, we don't limit access to, or classroom discussion of, ideas and opinions—including those that some may find uncomfortable or even offensive. In response to challenging material, students and instructors are encouraged to ask honest questions and thoughtfully engage one another's ideas. But hostility and disruptive or disrespectful behavior have no place in a classroom, and we will respect one another's full
humanity in this course.

Campus resources:

Emergency Contacts

UF Police: Emergency 911, non-emergency 352-392-1111 or http://www.police.ufl.edu/
UF Counseling and Wellness Center: 352-392-1575 or
http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/
UF 24/7 Crisis Center:
http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Emergency-Services

Student Healthcare Center

Dial 911 for medical emergencies
Dial 352-392-1161 for urgent after-hours medical questions
Dial 352-392-1171 for after-hours mental health assistance,
http://shcc.ufl.edu

General University Policies

Most policies and procedures important to students recorded here: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/

Academic Services

Library Support: http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask
Writing Studio: 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138;
http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/

GRA43816C / FA24 / Overview

> The following is a guide to the semester projects, some exact details may be subject to change as a result of in-class discussions or scheduling conflicts.

Project 1 / Understanding Design Thinking – WKS 1-3

Understand: what design thinking is, how it has changed, and what are its limitation and critiques.

Outcome: a collaborative concept map of design thinking

Project 2 / (Notice), Empathize, Define, Ideate (Weeks 4-8)

Objective: Understand the role of positionality in design thinking, and use listening to identify pressing issues in our communities. Start to broadly ideate based on this identified problem space.

Outcome: An identified "problem space" and a wide range of ideas that might lead to design prototyping and iteration in the next project.

Project 3 / Prototype, Test, Iterate (Weeks 9-13)

Objective: Develop design proposals based on the identified problem space.

Outcome: A better understanding of the complexity of identifying and designing around real world challenges. An initial prototype that has been tested and iterated.

Project 4 / Reflect (Weeks 14-15)

Activity: Presentation of outcomes and reflection on Design Thinking processes used throughout the semester.

Outcome: A portfolio-ready case study.

Tentative Weekly Schedule

Dates

🗓 Week	📅 Date	Aa Name	↗ Project
01	@August 21, 2024	NO CLASS	Project 1 / What is Design Thinking?
02	@August 26, 2024	P1 / Introducing Design Thinking	Project 1 / What is Design Thinking?
02	@August 28, 2024	P1 / Introducing Design Thinking	Project 1 / What is Design Thinking?
03	@September 2, 2024	NO CLASS / Holiday	Project 1 / What is Design Thinking?
03	@September 4, 2024	P1 / Critiques of Design Thinking	Project 1 / What is Design Thinking?
04	@September 9, 2024	P2 / Positionality	Project 2 / (Notice) Empathize, Define, Ideate
04	@September 11, 2024	P2 / Interviews and Listening	Project 2 / (Notice) Empathize, Define, Ideate
05	@September 16, 2024	P2 / Interviewing outside of the class	Project 2 / (Notice) Empathize, Define, Ideate
05	@September 18, 2024	P2 / Reflection and mapping	Project 2 / (Notice) Empathize, Define, Ideate
06	@September 23, 2024	P2 / Framing the Challenge	Project 2 / (Notice) Empathize, Define, Ideate
06	@September 25, 2024	P2 / Ideating	Project 2 / (Notice) Empathize, Define, Ideate
07	@September 30, 2024	P2 / Sharing and critiquing ideas	Project 2 / (Notice) Empathize, Define, Ideate
07	@October 2, 2024	P2 / Sharing and critiquing ideas	Project 2 / (Notice) Empathize, Define, Ideate
08	@October 7, 2024	P2 / Ideation Development	Project 2 / (Notice) Empathize, Define, Ideate
08	@October 9, 2024	P2 / Reflection and discussion	Project 2 / (Notice) Empathize, Define, Ideate
09	@October 14, 2024	P3	Project 3 / Protoype, Test, Iterate
09	@October 16, 2024	P3	Project 3 / Protoype, Test, Iterate
10	@October 21, 2024	P3	Project 3 / Protoype, Test, Iterate

📅 Week	🗓 Date	Aa Name	↗ Project
10	@October 23, 2024	P3	Project 3 / Protoype, Test, Iterate
11	@October 28, 2024	P3	Project 3 / Protoype, Test, Iterate
11	@October 30, 2024	P3	Project 3 / Protoype, Test, Iterate
12	@November 4, 2024	P3	Project 3 / Protoype, Test, Iterate
12	@November 6, 2024	P3	Project 3 / Protoype, Test, Iterate
13	@November 11, 2024	NO CLASS / Holiday	
13	@November 13, 2024	P3 Ends	Project 3 / Protoype, Test, Iterate
14	@November 18, 2024	P4 / Case study	Project 4 / Reflect
14	@November 20, 2024	P4 / Case Study	Project 4 / Reflect
HOLIDAY	@November 25, 2024 → November 29, 2024	NO CLASS / Thanksgiving	
15	@December 2, 2024	P4 / Reflect	Project 4 / Reflect
15	@December 4, 2024	LAST CLASS / P4 Due	Project 4 / Reflect