

**Course Information**

Professor / Lauren Meranda  
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Meetings / Tuesdays & Thursdays 4-6:45pm  
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**Course Description**

Can design do more than sell products for our clients? Can design move someone enough to change the course of events? Can design play a bigger role in solving societal problems?

This course is an instructor-guided investigation of creative work in graphic design leading to the proposal and preliminary work for Senior Project. Students will go through a series of explorations in finding a topic to investigate further, define a problem, and propose a design solution.

**Goals & Objectives**

To touch someone's heart with design  
To push the design process in our work  
To explore unexpected paths  
To connect personally with our work  
To hear criticism and effectively enact it

To write to explore, expand, and learn  
To analyze and distill personal writings  
To learn research and exploratory techniques  
To develop a soundly researched concept for a senior design project

**Attendance**

Attendance at all class meetings is required. More than two absences will impact your grade negatively, and more than three absences are grounds for an F, which means you don't graduate, so come to class!

Please note: No distinction will be made between excused and unexcused absences. You are responsible for maintaining your own schedule.

**Studio Space**

We will be meeting in studio 401 this semester, and you will all be working quite closely there all semester. Because of this, it is important that you keep the space clean and organized.

If you use something, clean up after yourself.

If something runs out, replenish it, or let the studio manager know.

If conflict arises, which it probably will, talk it out. No passive aggressive comments or notes. Be frank and open with each other. Confrontation isn't always bad; just don't be a jerk.

Lastly, DO NOT PROP OPEN THE DOOR! This is a strict rule in the university. The doors lock to keep us and our stuff safe. We have a lot of expensive equipment in the studio, and we want to keep it from being stolen.

**Materials**

Graphic Design Thinking  
 Sketchbook / Journal  
 Camera

Any materials students need for their personal project is the responsibility of that student.

**Late Work**

All assignments are due by the start of the next class meeting, unless otherwise noted. An assignment must be posted on the blog AND CORRECTLY CATEGORIZED in order to be considered turned in. Late work will be marked down one grade for each day past the due

date, e.g. an A assignment turned in after 4pm but within 24 hours will receive an A-. If you foresee a potential conflict, then see Prof. Meranda; with sufficient notice, it might be possible to arrange an alternative schedule.

**Conduct**

You are expected to conduct yourself courteously and professionally. Time spent in the classroom will be dedicated to presentation, discussion, and self-directed work time. Any other activities or behavior not conducive to our coursework will NOT be tolerated. Prohibited activities during class time include use of cell phones for talking or texting, surfing the web or social media for unrelated purposes, private

conversations amongst students, rude or insulting language or behavior, and any other form of distraction from the tasks at hand.

We have a lot of exciting work to do, and our time together is valuable. Let's make the most of it!

**Accomodations**

Judson University is committed to making reasonable accommodations to assist students with disabilities in reaching their academic potential. If you have a disability which may impact your performance, attendance, or grades in this class and are requesting accommodations, you must contact Gineen Vargas, ADA Compliance Coordinator in the Student Success Center, located in the Linder Tower—2nd floor at 847-628-1556.

of a current licensed clinician report outlining the disability, possible limitations and reasonable accommodations in order to meet the needs of the post-secondary coursework. Accommodations are never provided retroactively - prior to finalization of the Letter of Accommodation. Gineen will be happy to meet with you to discuss your accommodations. All discussions will remain confidential.

The ADA Compliance Coordinator is responsible for coordinating accommodations and services for students with disabilities. Accommodations will not be granted prior to receipt

Further information is available by visiting the Student Success Center website [https://myjudson.judsonu.edu/ICS/Student\\_Success\\_Center/](https://myjudson.judsonu.edu/ICS/Student_Success_Center/)

The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus should the need arise. You will be notified of any changes.

Course Overview

- 1 / Touch the heart of an individual with design
- 2 / Touch the heart of a community with design
- 3 / Touch the heart of humanity with design
- 4 / Writing to explore: list of 10 things most important
- 5 / Writing for perspective: creative essay
- 6 / Writing to Extract: exploring current knowledge
- 7 / Writing on Research: developing research goals
- 8 / Building Empathy through Research
- 9 / Making Sense of Research
- 10 / Generating Ideas
- 11 / Writing a Thesis Statement
- 12 / Creating Audience Segments
- 13 / Developing a Project Proposal
- 14 / Proposal Presentations!
- 15 / Analyze Critique
- 16 / Plan for Production

### Course Overview

Can design do more than sell products for our clients?

Can design move someone enough to change the course of events?

Can design play a bigger role in solving societal problems?

"So much of what designers do is technically very good, but it leaves people cold and has little meaning in their lives. The question came out of a frustration of drowning in professionally designed things that nobody gives a shit about, neither the maker nor the receiver. The main reason for all this stuff is that most designers don't believe in anything. When your conscience is so flexible, how can you do strong design?"

–Stefan Sagmeister

### Week 1

#### August 25

What can Design do? What do you think is Design's role in society?

Write a personal design manifesto.

Homework:

Distill personal design manifesto into a 500-800 word belief statement.

#### August 27

Touch the heart of an individual with design.

Look at the people around you—What are the challenges they face? Look within yourself—in what ways could you use design to impact your life? Propose a tangible way in which design can touch an individual.

Homework:

Touch the heart of an individual with design... and document it. Post results to the blog.

### Week 2

#### September 1

Present results from "Touch the heart of an individual with design"—5min/person

Touch the heart of a community with design.

What are some communities that you belong to? Choose one. Make a list of ten facts that define this community.

Format it as: Statement, Analogy, Metaphor...

**s** I go grocery shopping at least twice a week without an idea of what I want to get.

**a** My bi-weekly trips to Whole Foods are to grocery shopping as an improv actor is to theater.

**m** Each visit to the grocery store is an improv show in which I am the actor

Homework:

What are some challenges or areas of improvement for your chosen community?

Create a tangible project proposal for how design can touch the heart of a community.

**September 3**

Case studies

Research

Exploration/Experimentation

Homework:

Touch the heart of a community with design...and document it. Post results to the blog.

**Week 3**

**September 8**

Present results from "Touch the heart of a community with design"–5min/person

Touch the heart of humanity with design.

Write to learn–write a list of three global/humanity issues that you are concerned about

Discuss–break into groups by themes

Distill–narrow to a common theme

Homework:

Create a tangible project proposal for how design can touch the heart of humanity.

**September 10**

Present proposals

Case studies

Research

Exploration/Experimentation

Homework:

Touch the heart of humanity with design... and document it. Post results to the blog.

**Week 4**

**Writing to Explore**

Take some time to think about what is important to you– objects / topics / issues / activities / etc. Make a list of 7-10 of these things. Write a paragraph for each explaining why you find them important. Post on the blog

Homework: Narrow the list

Distill and analyze your in-class writing. Create written "features" on three of the topics you named as most important to you. You may revise your list. A feature should explain the what, where, why, etc. about your topics

**Writing for Perspective**

Every story has two sides. In conflict resolution, looking at the other person's side helps give us perspective and empathy. We can gain a new understanding of the situation.

Homework:

In all situations, ones of conflict or joy, looking at it from a different perspective can deepen our understanding. For homework, you are to take two of your topics and look at them from a different angle. Identify a subject/object within your topic, and write an essay from it's/their perspective. Your essay does not have to be any specific length. Write what needs to be written—no more, no less. Post your essays on the blog, and be prepared to read them to the class on Tuesday.

**Week 5**

**Writing to Extract**

Finding a project from a subject requires having a more intimate understanding of the topic. Knowing the subject matter is not necessarily understanding it, so we are going to deepen your understanding by extracting details.

If you have decided which subject matter you'd like to proceed with, you can do the following exercises with your chosen topic. If you are still not sure, keep exploring with both topics. Hopefully this step will help you decide which area to move forward with.

Homework:

In your book, Design Thinking, are process activities to help you dig deeper. You must apply a total of six of these processes to your topic(s). If you have one, do six exercises with that one topic. If you are still deciding between two, you may split the six between the two however you see fit. You MUST have 6 exercises by next Tuesday.

**Writing for Research**

Thus far, we have been relying heavily on information and assumptions you already have. Researching your topics more thoroughly will help you know and understand them more deeply. Gathering more information will give you a systematic knowledge of the ins and outs of your topic. You can learn what makes your topic what it is, why it is that way, and what are some of the problems within or facing it.

Types of Research:

Qualitative / Quantitative / Primary / Secondary / Market / Production / Any more?

Discuss:

What is the importance of research? Where do you begin? What are you trying to discover? How do you keep track of your research?

Homework

Pick one of your two topics to move forward with.

Read Design Meets Research

Write up your goals for the research of your topic.

Make a research plan. Be as specific as possible.

What sources will you use?

## Week 6

### **Building Empathy through Research**

In class presentation: Design Thinking 101

Homework:

Create a hunt statement

Create a list of people to interview

Develop a discussion guide for interviews

Read and keep track of your research. We will devote two weeks to this step.

## Week 8

### **Making Sense of Research**

In class Presentation

Group practice interviews

Take observations from interviews and develop insight statements

Homework:

Continue with reading and doing research

Develop a list of observations from your research

Craft 3 insight statements based on your observations

Post both the list of observations and 3 insight statements on the blog

### **Generating Ideas**

In class Presentation

Take your insight statements from the previous class to develop “how might we” statements. Write as many “how might we” statements as you can. You’ll use these statements to generate ideas for your project.

Homework:

Organize “how might we” statements by themes. Prepare for a collective brainstorming session.

### **Collective Brainstorming Session**

Lead a small group of classmates in a brainstorming session based on your “how might we” statements. Participants will create concept sheets to help generate ideas.

Homework:

Take concept sheets and analyze ideas. Use them as a catalyst to further dream and brainstorm on your own. Come to class on Tuesday with three possible proposals.

## Week 9

### Writing a Thesis Statement

First, we will discuss what a thesis statement is and why it is important to write one. Then, using the thesis statement formula provided, you'll write your own.

Primary Statement

Motivation ([Something] [does something].)

Secondary Statement

Because [reason(s)], [something] [does something].

Tertiary Statement

Although [opposing evidence], [reasons] show [Something] [does something].

Supporting Statement

Concluding Statement

Homework:

Write thesis statement

## Week 10

### Creating Audience Segments

Now that you have a thesis statement and idea for your project proposal, we are going to break down who your project will serve. You are to develop multiple audience segments to help guide the formation of your project

## Week 11

### Developing a Project Proposal

Keeping in mind the previous steps, we will work on turning your idea into a proposal presentation. We will start by using your thesis statements to write an outline of the story you want to convey about your project idea in your presentation. Presentations are only 5min, so you'll need to keep it fairly simple. Talk your points out loud for clarity.

Take your outline and design slides that correspond to what you're saying. For ease on the day of presentations, everyone should use google slides. You can add what you want to talk about for each slide in the notes section. This will only display on the presenter display and not the main screen. Keep your presentation clean and clear. Do not use crazy graphics or transitions.

We will practice presenting your presentations in front of the whole class two times. Each time, you will all take notes for every other student and offer suggestions for improvement or reveal areas that were unclear. Practice your presentation out loud by yourself before our practice presentations. This will ensure you get the most out of the experience.

## Week 14

### Analyze Critique

Your presentations are done. Each of you should have received a packet of feedback from the panelists. We will go over the feedback and how to use this information to improve your ideas.

### Planning for Production

Before we dive into work on your projects, let's make sure we have a good sense of the overall tasks you need to accomplish.

First, take inventory of steps you need to do. (think: additional interviews, ideation, testing, print time, etc.)

Then, working backwards on the calendar, plan out your production schedule.