

HCD 101 PIG Grant REPORT
October 2023

Participants:

What was the outcome of your project and how did it align with your original goals as stated in your application?

We proposed that the 5 faculty members who would be teaching HCD 101 in the next 2-3 years would participate in a summer 2023 workshop and background preparation to 1) *develop the outline of the HCD syllabus*; 2) *begin to design our 400-level capstone course*; 3) *brainstorm ways to develop community*; 4) *figure out some ways to utilize the classroom space effectively*; 5) *decide on advising and decision-making procedures*; and 6) *reach consensus on other procedural logistics of the program*.

All of these are meant to be developed within a liberal arts setting, with attention to depth, breadth, and interdisciplinarity.

In our workshop, we utilized several HCD techniques to review the program development process, our own views of challenges and opportunities, and our views about the proposed textbook for the course, among other activities.

We achieved the aforementioned goals and more, elaborated here:

1) The syllabus is outlined, with a sketch of the spring 2024 calendar, broad topics, key readings, project definitions, and materials and resources lists included. Students will not only learn concepts and methods of HCD, they will produce designed items in the course that they can use in their eventual portfolios, and they will design their HCD concentration plans.

Each participant offered different ways to approach syllabus design. These offerings included a spreadsheet of the “rhythm” of the semester (e.g., labs on one day, discussions on another; semester divided into broad topics that align with the chosen text). Other drafts included a detailed outline of the first four weeks (including a

wayfinding exercise and first assignment submission deadlines) and rough outline of weeks 5-15. The group agreed upon these sections and that there should be some kind of predictable “rhythm,” which the first two instructors will refine and detail in December and January as they head into the first iteration of the course.

Week 1 to 4: Wayfinding and Skimming Textbook; Getting a basic overview and some experience.

Week 5-8: Project Preparation - Refining Knowledge of Tools and Practice

Week 9-13: Design Sprints and Iterations

Weeks 14-15: Public Presentations

Importantly, in designing the syllabus we also discussed the inclusion of examples of designed artifacts and methods of design from Indigenous and non-Western cultures through different periods in history, thus demonstrating our goal to research different ways that the HCD concentration can engage deeply and broadly within the liberal arts disciplines.

2) We began work on how the HCD 101 course would feed into subsequent work by students that would culminate in HCD 497. This will be ongoing work. Much of the work associated with the capstone course will be developed as we see how the students in 101 do.

3) We utilized events to start to build community among students and alumni (and other faculty): we shared our ideas in formal events with alumni and prospective students, and we are part of the Capital Campaign event program. We decided to host an info session before spring 2024 registration for students (currently being planned).

4) We designed an introductory project for HCD 101 on “wayfinding” that not only captures key concepts and methods in HCD, but also allows students to better understand, utilize, and design the classroom space itself. We also made a materials list for items we’ll need for the course. This was helped by a visit to Fouts where we could see tools and materials in another makerspace on campus.

5) We finalized our advising form and the Registrar’s office has now placed this on the website. We have our first declared HCD “concentrator” as of September 2023!

6) As part of our core principles of democratic decision-making and collaborative pedagogical and program design, we decided to have bi-weekly meetings during 2023-24 as a group to continue to refine procedures, keep track of events that we hope will build community among prospective students and advisees, and work on the Designer-in-Residence program, which we hope will begin next year (we are working with consultant Katie Krummeck on this). Janet and Justin are serving as program directors. These meetings, which have been happening all this semester as part of our conversation on the designer-in-residence, are fleshing out more specifically how students can achieve their learning objectives and will have some influence on the senior seminar.

As a bonus, we also submitted a \$150,000 NEH grant to help fund summer community engaged learning HCD projects and the Designer-In-Residence program.

Also, we each bought the book we'll use in in the course, via PIG funds (IDEO's *The Field Guide to Human-Centered Design*) – we had critiques of the book but have decided to use it as designed object itself, thus making the book useful as information resource and catalyst for student learning about critique of designed items. The folks who were physically present also grabbed lunch both days. So, the funding covered these items already; the stipends have yet to be paid.

What sense do you have at this point that your project has enhanced student learning and what will you be looking at in the future to know whether the project was successful?

The class has not yet been offered. We aligned our syllabus development with our student learning goals, so we will participate in the usual programmatic assessment procedures to see if the course itself meets student learning needs during 2024. This assessment will inform future iterations. At least two of the professors who will teach the course beyond spring 2024 will attend some class meetings and keep track of how the syllabus is going.

What were the limitations or failings of this project, and how, in retrospect, might they have been better addressed or remedied?

One member could not attend in person due to COVID, so there was some limitation in how the space itself may (or may not) foster easy collaboration. However, the generous spirit of those attending allowed this person to feel as if they were fully present. Scheduling the workshop proved challenging because of summer research travel, but doing the work over an intensive 2-day period (rather than spread out over several

weeks) actually allowed for some deep exploration and continuity from one day to the next. In this sense, it was truly a workshop rather than a prolonged set of meetings.

How do you envision sharing the results of your work with other colleagues at Whitman (or elsewhere)?

We hope to do a CTL event this year not only to explain HCD, but also to show colleagues how the principles of HCD may be applied to pedagogical development generally, and how it may be available to colleagues who wish to include it in their own courses (which we hope can be part of our “deepening” course offerings). As noted, we are already doing plenty of sharing via formal and informal events with alumni, donors, and students.