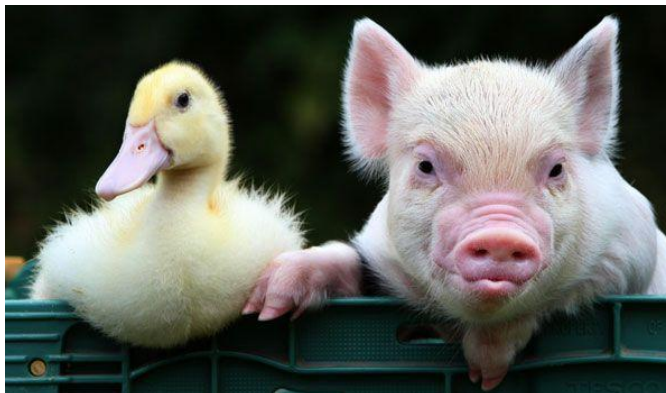


**PIG Grant Report (summer 2021)
Developing Digital Studies and Experience Design at Whitman College**



DUX, PIG

Workshop Leaders: Janet Davis and Justin Lincoln

Other Participants: Sharon Alker, William Bares, Sarah Hurlburt, Michelle Janning, Kynde Kiefel, Jason Pribilsky, Daniel Schindler, Michael Simon, David Sprunger, and John Stratton

What was the outcome of your project and how did it align with your original goals as stated in your application? (note: these goals are condensed and paraphrased from the PIG Proposal)

Goal 1: To explore and develop an understanding of digital studies and experience design (UX) towards developing a new academic program at Whitman College in these areas.

Outcomes: We agreed that there should be an academic program in these areas at Whitman College. We tentatively agreed on Design and User Experience (DUX) as a name for the program. Via group discussion, reading, disciplinary application presentations, visual analysis, affinity mapping, design activities, and conversations with alumni guest speakers working in the field of UX, we developed learning goals. The learning goals integrate all three divisions, with a particular emphasis that a new program should not center on Computer Science alone, and with an eye towards ensuring a liberal arts approach to fields that require specific skills and abilities post-Whitman. See Appendix A for some individual workshop participant reflections; see Appendix B for a venn diagram representation of how fundamental liberal arts skills combine to make up this field.

Learning Goals (draft):

Artifact: a performative experience, scholarly work, tangible product, or computer software system created and evaluated by students of this program.

L01. Research and analyze applicable issues of usability, utility, ethics, societal impact, cultural impact, accessibility for persons with different abilities, gender identity, legal,

and environmental impacts of the artifact and apply this knowledge to inform the design of the artifact.

Example – Electric vehicles can reduce carbon emissions and be powered by renewable energy sources, but they depend on lithium batteries which is a limited resource. What does this dynamic mean for future designs of green cities and transportation networks?

L02. Apply an iterative process that includes multiple rounds of defining a problem, defining evaluation goals with respect to L01, prototyping the artifact, evaluating the artifact, and deploying the artifact. This iterative process will apply tools and design processes from multiple disciplines.

Example – Create a museum installation, play, performance, or short film by incorporating revisions based on feedback from an audience or focus groups.

L03. Learn effective teamwork practices while working in a multidisciplinary team to gain an appreciation of how the skills of different disciplines contribute to creating the artifact.

Example – Create a stage production that addresses themes of social or environmental justice realized through designs of costumes, lighting, and stage scenery.

L04. Apply data to evaluate or create an artifact where evaluation (per L01) may entail data gathering, data analysis, natural-language processing, machine learning, and data visualization or storytelling and creation may entail developing or applying algorithms that deal with digital data that may include audio, video, motion, feedback of people who interact with the artifact, etc.

Example – apply motion-capture data from Native American dancers to generate audio visuals that interpret a traditional story in a new way (we will soon have a new lab with this capability).

L05. Understand and reason about the current limitations and potential future capabilities of any one or more tools, methods of problem-solving, societal or environmental constraints, or computational systems. Learners will apply practices of scholarship to research, discuss, and analyze limitations and future potential related to the artifact(s) they design.

Example – What are the political and legal limits of emerging new forms of social media content authorship and authentication that could more effectively combat disinformation and deepfakes?

Goal 2: To bring together concepts relating to the intersecting areas of technology, creativity, and critical analysis across all three academic divisions into a cohesive program with choices that are responsive to student needs.

Outcome: The learning goals above demonstrate the academic intersections noted in Goal 2. In terms of responding to student needs: Two Whitman seniors who had worked with three of the workshop participants -- a sociology major and anthropology major -- conducted three UX-methods-based student focus groups to find out how students at varying levels of familiarity with UX envisioned a program that would fit into the liberal arts and meet their learning needs. This research was supported with funding from the Sociology Department. The central findings were consistent with the workshop participants' discussions; namely, that any program at Whitman must be centered in the liberal arts, must be interdisciplinary, and must be accessible to students with varying levels of preparedness for the program. The report that students Cassie Nelson and Eva Coulon created is in Appendix C.

Goal 3: To discuss possible courses, modules, program formats, and possibility of a national center for digital studies and experience design in the liberal arts at Whitman College, along with a timeline for these elements.

Outcome: We did not decide on the format of the DUX academic program. We discussed various formats of a program, including a stand-alone major, major hyphenated with other programs (e.g., Art-DUX), "major +" models, concentration, and integrated minor. Members of the group drafted and discussed different curricular models, including credit amounts, scaffolding of learning at beginning/intermediate/advanced levels, inclusion of off-campus activities, and potential staffing issues -- though we did not come to any decisions about these since we did not decide whether it should be a major, concentration, minor, etc. A key dilemma that will be discussed as the program is developed (with feedback from faculty) is whether to offer combined majors or some other type of academic program. The former approach would provide clear guidance to students and allow departments to count DUX students among their majors, which may be particularly important for some social science methods courses which are already overenrolled. The latter approach may be more inclusive of students and faculty in all departments (akin to Environmental Humanities rather than Environmental Studies-Biology, e.g.).

We also developed a tentative timeline that would lead to the solidification of an academic program which could start in Fall 2023, depending on progress:

- Fall 2021 - Reaching out to the Whitman Community more broadly
 - Faculty Forum introducing DUX
 - November 2021 - connect with any Trustees who are interested in learning more
- Spring 2022 - Gather support beyond the initial workshop participants
 - Meet with departments and/or divisions
 - April 2022 - possible student design project session at the WUC
 - 2021-22 - finalize learning goals; develop new modules for existing courses
- Summer 2022 - Stanford Design Institute for a few workshop participants
- 2022-23 - First offerings of new classes; propose academic program requirements (and format)
- 2023-24 - New academic program in the catalog (this means that, for a current senior in high school, this academic program will probably exist by the time they declare a major as a sophomore).

- After 2023: potentially create a national center for DUX in the liberal arts, depending on events and outcomes 2021-2024.

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?

A clear demonstration of success and eventual student learning for our project will be the creation of a sustainable academic program in this subject area by the 2023-24 academic year, which will be accompanied by existing College-required assessment protocols for the learning goals, and which will require clear staffing, infrastructure, and funding (as any academic program does). Necessarily, whoever is involved in the program in formal ways would facilitate the assessment of student learning (and staffing needs) in the future.

Post-workshop exit interviews demonstrated that student learning was directly enhanced in Summer 2021 for the two student focus group leaders and ten student participants (see Goal 2 above). This is measured most concretely by the student researchers' capacity to use UX techniques in the gathering and reporting of student ("users") opinions in an accessible way -- all with an eye toward helping design a new academic program (See Appendix C).

In addition, some workshop participants have already included UX/Experience design as a module or sub-topic in Fall 2021 classes based on content that was covered in the summer workshop (e.g., Soc 211 Community-Based Sociology has a week dedicated to the topic).

We believe that the creation of a program in Design/User Experience will clarify a path of study for future students that capitalizes on assets and trends from recent students in many areas of the college. The summer workshop was prompted in part by several students that attempted to create their own majors at Whitman. We anticipate an increasing number of students seeking to do research in these areas as more course units/modules (and possibly courses) emerge between Fall 2021 and Spring 2023.

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

We are glad that we were advised to come up with learning outcomes instead of developing the curriculum for this program. The biggest challenge we see now in terms of developing that curriculum is the structure of the program itself. While there is great enthusiasm and energy in and around this group (we all seem to agree that its multi-disciplinary nature is one of its greatest advantages and attractions), it also makes it harder to house it in terms of a concentration or as a combined major. We also see staffing issues as important, since course offerings in DUX would mean fewer offerings elsewhere and could mean pressure on existing overenrolled classes. However, since the primary goal of this project was to develop an understanding of the content area and create a roadmap for how to create an academic program, we believe the project has been successful. Moving forward it will be important to keep momentum going by adding at least some structure to the ongoing work (and timeline).

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

We presented a Faculty Forum in September for faculty members, administrators, alumni, and trustees to share our ideas and solicit questions and feedback (link: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1S7bYO1CFchH5o6pPDV8h1gh9DFIUC0Sh/view>). A handful of alumni and Whitman colleagues have already responded to presenters in positive ways. We plan to touch base during 21-22 to get feedback from faculty on various formats this program may take.

Budget and expenses:

Participant stipends: everyone listed in the PIG grant participated fully. 1) Justin Lincoln and Janet Davis should each receive \$1500 for organizing the summer workshop. 2) All other ten participants should each receive \$750.

We did not spend the budget allocated for honoraria, texts, or materials.

Appendix A: Individual participant reflections on the workshop

We shared our understandings of both design thinking and user experience. This helped us both understand the complexity of these approaches and find some areas of intersection across disciplines and divisions. For me that was coming to the realization that since DH (my background) tended to be directed towards non-profit projects and grant funding, my concept of a user might be different from some of my colleagues.

In the Fall of 2019 a student approached me about proposing a self designed degree in User Experience Design . Initially I sent the student to Janet Davis in CS, who sent the student back to me. The student and I pursued an independent study course researching the field. Eventually the student declared a major in Sociology. Based on the research the student and I did, such a triangulation of different fields, across different divisions in the school, makes perfect sense as a path for a UX Designer. The student also did an Abshire grant with me to create a design system. All of this preamble came to bear on the success of this project and group.

In over ten years at Whitman I have seen several attempts to create an interdisciplinary program that connects technology with the Liberal Arts across the spectrum of disciplines. At the end of the Summer workshop I found myself much more energized than drained by the work we undertook. There are many competing responsibilities in the group, leading in part to the delay of this report. However, every time we discuss the topic or convene , such as at the Faculty Forum presentation, I find myself similarly energized and excited. I am convinced that this program will benefit students, faculty , and alumni (who are strongly represented in the field of UX even preceding this program.) I believe that there is great demand amongst students and the faculty interest continues to grow. I look forward to seeing the next stages of this process.

One of my main reasons for attending this workshop was to figure out how my own (limited) background in Digital Humanities was relevant to design thinking or to user experience. I am interested in developing a strong and every-growing relationship between disciplines in the humanities and technology. Since humanists often study the medium of communication as well as the content, it has seemed for decades to me that our humanities disciplines would be the perfect place to address how changing technologies are changing narratives of all sorts, in addition to figuring out how to use new technologies to provide access to deep knowledge, including historical knowledge. What I found was that design thinking closely aligns with what I already do - I am teaching a form of design when I teach students how to craft rhetorically-powerful analytic arguments. But I found that at the same time, it might be useful, in an age of many new forms of communication, to think about how to weave different sorts of design assignments into my classroom. I had done this previously in my classrooms, requiring students to design an Omeka exhibit in some of my historical period classes and also asking them to design a digital project and write a grant proposal to support it (along with a prototype) in my digital studies class. This workshop has given me more information on how to amplify this strand in my pedagogy. It also encouraged me to think about “users” or audiences. Digital Humanities (because it is often creating non-profit materials, websites, databases etc.) does not tend to spend as much time studying its users because it is not trying to sell them something.

Digital Humanities practitioners do try to make their online projects easy to navigate and attractive, but their relationship with their users is distinct from corporate offices. This has made me consider what relationship we do have with our “users.” A scholarly analytic paper is crafted for a certain sort of audience, but if I asked my students to instead create an exhibit about the work they are reading, how should they conceive of their users and their users’ relationship with the text that the exhibit is centered on?

Thus far, I have confined my thoughts to my own classroom, but this workshop had a great deal of significance beyond that. I now believe it is wholly possible and desirable to design a program or programs that involve design thinking or user experience. And I believe the humanities would have a lot to offer such a program. Our contributions might involve taking the skills we teach - close reading, critical depth, contextual assessment, cultural understanding etc. and figuring out how these vital skills can be adapted to new technologies and can be used to transform new technologies.

This Design Thinking and User Experience workshop was incredibly useful in so many ways. The breadth of knowledge and disciplines within the group offered what felt like both expansive and tangible potential outcomes. In my staff position as a director/curator for the Sheehan Gallery and manager of art collections on campus, these explorations applied to us in both front and backstage aspects. We collaborate with students throughout the academic year on their Studio Art thesis exhibitions/projects, and we also advise and help build individual curatorial projects and displays for various departments. We are constantly aiming to evolve what we can offer through technology in both the exhibitions and searchable collections realms. I often learn in real-time along with our students about new technologies, means of productions, means of display, and increasingly important: means of interaction.

Curating spaces and conceiving of immersive shows involves a lot of consideration of user experience. Our mission is to create lasting experiences and our hope is to widen the opportunities for experimentation and maker spaces on Whitman College campus. From the artists and work we represent to the visitors and educators that create meaning within our spaces, our goal is to do better, reach further, delve deeper into the themes we tackle and the pedagogical implications and planning related to this summer’s PIG will help further connect and broaden our awareness and those capabilities.

Another goal in the next year is to make the collections on campus much more accessible both physically and technologically. We have a 5-year backlog of teachable objects, many of which represent our pledge to invest in BIPOC, LGBTQIA+, and artists with disabilities. We need to make these works more public in a logical, searchable, considerate, and aesthetically clear way. I consider all that we learned in this workshop to better inform how we approach this goal. The need for this is present and pressing and I am newly-invigorated by what was discussed and learned in our group.

And finally, the collaborative, bridge-building, and community outreach aspect to what everyone offered in the Digital Studies/Design Thinking/User Experience PIG further emphasized the

ways we want to consider our delivery systems as far as getting ideas and art to the people and representing work fairly and clearly. The Sheehan Gallery continues to aim for more outreach opportunities and interactive experiences, so considering all the ways in which technology and design may inform this will transform our ability to support student, faculty, and community learning in the coming years. I am motivated and inspired at what we all might collaborate on and be able to offer.

Going into this summer's explorations, I shared many of the same presuppositions as others in our group about the intersection of liberal arts and user experience/user design. Chief among those was that design and user experience lie solely in the arts and computer science, and further, that UI/UX and Design are the domain of the private sector. What I discovered was quite the opposite. Not only did I learn that yes, these fields are overtly prized and championed by the private sector, but that potentially every academic discipline at Whitman has a stake and can benefit from them.

The reach of UI/UX and Design goes further than academic disciplines. I joined the DUX group this summer for two reasons. First, as a member of the team that is developing the co-curricular Digital Fluencies initiative, I wanted to see in what ways the early curricular thought processes on UI/UX and Design might overlap with Digital Fluencies. (Which, in short, is that it's mostly too early to tell.). Secondly, I sought to understand in what ways Technology Services might support the emergence of DUX as an academic concentration or major.

On this latter track of inquiry, I made a couple of discoveries, with the promise of more to come. During the panel we held with alumni involved in UI/UX in the private sector, a significant theme the panelists discussed was their ongoing development of their professional project portfolios. At Whitman, we have historically had a very scattered (at best) approach toward students developing (pre)professional/academic portfolios, and yet here were several alumni telling us very clearly about the importance this type of presentation is in their professional lives. In reflecting on this, I realized that in Whitman's academic departments, the ideas and techniques of design, experience and intentionality that we explored this summer could be widely adopted to help students present their work in portfolios. Academic-facing staff departments could assist in these efforts by providing overarching framing, logistical, and technological support. Technology Services and the Library, for example, could revisit earlier investigations into enterprise level ePortfolio technologies to help provide academic departments with a common platform/framework to use with students across campus.

One other thought that I've returned to (on a topic that is likely beyond my purview) is on the massive nature of the UI/UX/Design disciplines relative to what the DUX group envisions as possible next steps. UI/UX and Design could be full-blown majors of their own (and are at other institutions). This is not what our group is after, instead focusing on an interdisciplinary approach that may either be a major or a concentration (like Global Studies.) As such, certain potentially desirable elements of UI/UX and Design might not get taught, in some cases lamentably so. One possible example might be drawing. Not with a capital "D," as the Art Department definitely teaches several drawing courses already, but with a little "d." (And let's

further say, hypothetically, that drawing was not formally included in the DUX concentration.) So often in UI/UX and Design, work is done by sketching objects, diagrams, or other ideas. If a (so-called) “non-artistic” student decided to enter into a DUX concentration which did not include a Drawing course, and yet it became clear to them the importance of even basic (stick-figure-ish) drawing, what recourse would they have short of taking an art class? Would there be a way for them to “hack” drawing with a set of guidelines Whitman could provide? Workshops? A J-Term class? Something else? I pick drawing not as an actual example, but rather to be emblematic of one of the challenges— or rather opportunities— that we at Whitman will face as DUX continues to develop. My experiences with DUX this summer answered some questions. But as with so many things, it also raised handfuls of compelling new ones.

It was informative to learn about how so many diverse fields apply a largely common set of high-level learning activities including defining goals for measuring success, refining drafts of the solution over a series of progressive iterations, collaborative and team processes including critiques, consideration of how what is being done affects the larger society in aspects of accessibility, inclusion, equity, and environmental impact, and applying data to make conclusions and communicate results to diverse audiences. Although not every class or major represented by the participants included all of these learning activities, it became evident as we each took turns sharing our teaching experiences related to design that we had more than enough shared practices upon which to build a potential program or concentration. The draft learning outcomes that I proposed for this new initiative represent my summary and synthesis of the summer discussions. The draft learning outcomes captured the larger common spirit of the problem-solving process of design situated in a liberal arts college. The vision for the program draws upon the strengths of the liberal arts in seeing connections between different fields, learning to communicate and collaborate with people who have diverse skill sets, and thinking about how what we do impacts the larger world. These common design problem-solving practices transcend any individual discipline so I wrote these draft learning goals so they might be realized over a range of design- and experience-focus disciplines that might create and think in a variety of modalities and tools ranging from the fully analog to the fully digital. In my introductory Computer Science classes, I teach a problem-solving by design strategy that emphasizes creating, explaining, and critiquing analog drafts of algorithms and expected inputs and outputs before laying hands on a keyboard. I refer to each revision of the design as a draft or sketch – borrowing terms from writing and art classes. We also heard the above common themes from our panel of alumni and saw how they constructed their own educational and later professional development to gain the problem-solving skills envisioned by the outcomes of this working group.

In Fall 2019, somewhat on a whim, I taught a special topics course (200-level) on the broad topic of the “Anthropology of Design.” The course was inspired by works in science and technology studies that I was already teaching and utilizing for my research, as well as attendance at a summer D School workshop at Stanford.

Participating in the PIG helped contextualize those experiences and helped me to see connections with other disciplines and fields that, before, I did not know were utilizing design principles.

The PIG was also a useful proof-of-concept that we, indeed, the College could put together a design major (or concentration) right now, building on our collective expertise.

What struck me most about working with the UX Focus Group is how universal some of these experiences are and how broad the interpretation of “user experience” can be... or even if you want to call it that. There are spaces in this program of study for a wide variety of students and each one will bring with them unique and valuable ways of approaching the topics presented. I was concerned at the start that the idea of this focus would be so rooted in Computer Science studies, that it would put off other students who might have an interest in it. However, as we progressed through our meetings, it became clear that this was not the case. In fact, the liberal arts environment and its focus on understanding multiple points of view when solving problems in a collaborative environment are the essential tools that students in this program will develop. Tools that are extremely useful and marketable when they graduate. This broad-ranging focus on UX is applicable to many disciplines. It will offer something not available at other technical training schools that focus more on coding and the technical aspects of training. It will produce a synergy of what we want at an advanced liberal arts college, students from different disciplines working together to solve complex problems in unique ways.

The summer workshop helped me understand what UX is, how it is connected to my own discipline, and how it connects my discipline to others. This is a topic that also integrates all three divisions in clear and unique ways. This summer uncovered a whole lot of somewhat hidden pedagogical and scholarly expertise among my colleagues. There is so much opportunity with this subject area, and Whitman should position itself as a leader among liberal arts colleges for a thoughtful, critical, and integrated approach to UX for our students and the places those students will eventually be.

Like many of my colleagues have mentioned before, I came into the summer workshop somewhat skeptical of the applicability of User Experience Design to the liberal arts, but I have left with the profound feeling that UX is at the heart of what we do in so many ways. I could see how my subspeciality of music technology and production might fit in with UX, but until now I didn't see the broader implications and ways that an understanding of and deep engagement with UX can enrich a music experience. This workshop contextualized and broadened my view of the discipline and made clear for me the many ways in which UX applies to the field of music – we're just used to hearing different terms. Audience, concert, composition, production – these are all designed experiences, and with thoughtful engagement with the principles and interdisciplinary nature of DUX, we can create better experiences all the way around. We do this subconsciously, but by fully engaging with what we discussed this summer, everyone benefits in a more intentional way.

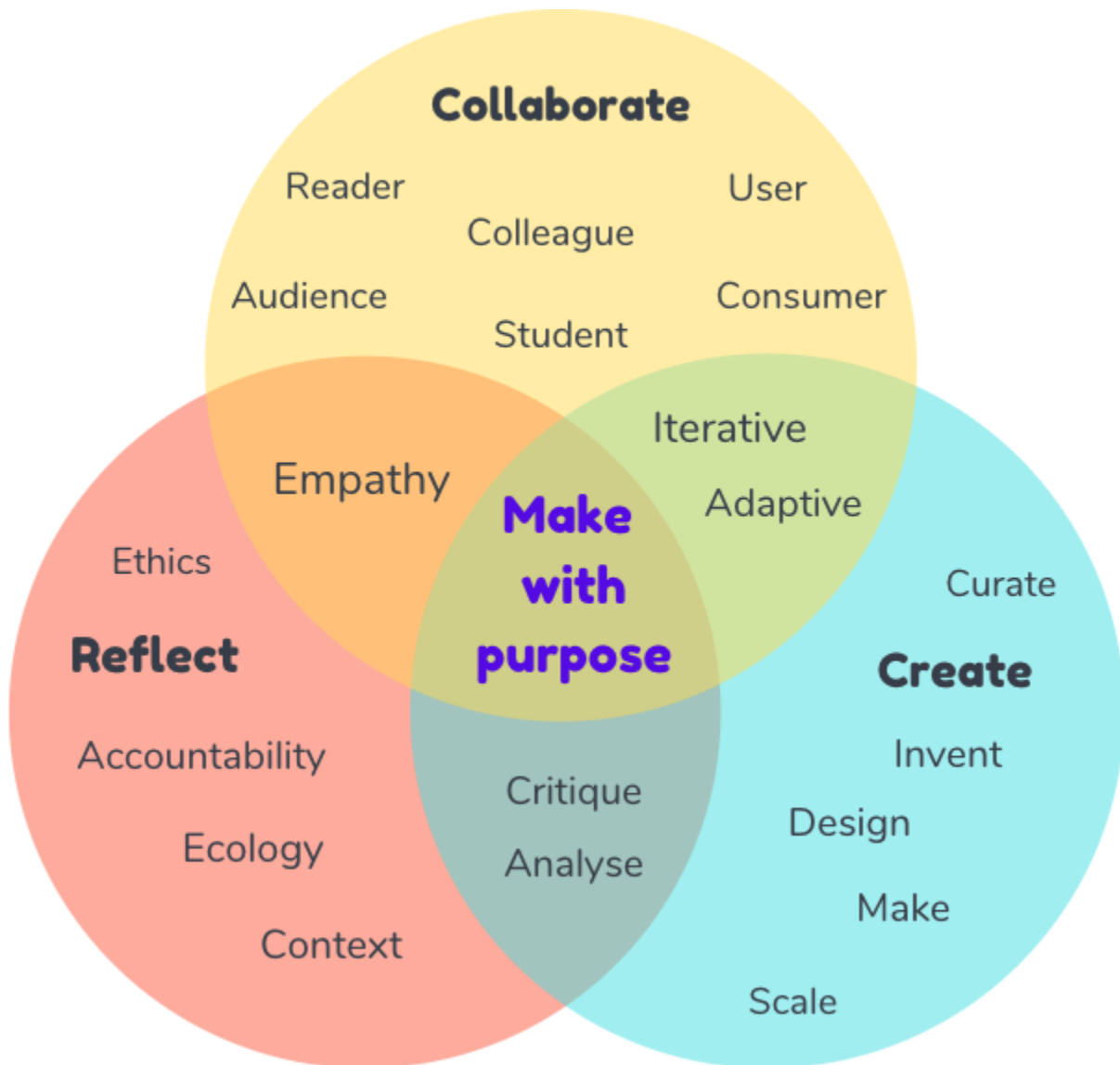
This group of colleagues is amazing, and there's something to be learned by our students from the massive breadth of speciality, knowledge, and intersectionality present in such a group. I have high hopes for this program, and hope that our students will be able to engage with and fully explore this interdisciplinary field.

This working group taught me that there is already substantial interest and expertise among the Whitman faculty regarding Design principles and processes. While creating a full program would require, at minimum, freeing up those individuals to regularly teach courses in the program, it would not require a cluster of new hires the way that the computer science program did.

I also learned reasons for how and why Design is in support of and supported by the Liberal Arts ethos. Design is inherently interdisciplinary, requiring connections to disciplines that can contribute means of creation, methods of human subject research, and applications of ethics and aesthetics. Design is also a much-needed outlet for impact that our students deeply desire; a set of tools for effecting change based on the knowledge and values they acquire in their college education. While it is connected to a professional community, it is not a narrow career-preparation program, and in that way is similar to computer science. The program clearly supports students in preparing for jobs in a specific field, but is also contributing new ways of thinking and broad problem-solving skills that could be used outside of those specific professions.

Appendix B: Venn Diagram of DUX skills and practices, created by Sarah Hurlburt as an alternative way to envision cross-disciplinary learning goals. The categories attempt to capture how DUX skills and practices intersect broadly with core skills of the liberal arts education.

Several alumni attending the faculty forum presentation on September 21 indicated in the chat that this diagram captured their work experience in design and user experience quite accurately.



Design Studies Program Student Feedback



WHITMAN COLLEGE

Research conducted by Cassidy Nelson and Eva Coulon
Supervised by Professor Michelle Janning

10 Participants

All Current Whitman Students

Group Demographics

3 identified as men, 7 as women (representative of the Whitman Population)
Focus group members were racially diverse.
Participants included those from the current classes of 2022, 2023, and 2024.



Focus Group 1



Focus Group 2



Focus Group 3

Digital Studies/UX Familiarity Ranking

- Not Familiar at All
- A Little Familiar
- Somewhat Familiar
- Very Familiar

Group response did not differ based on familiarity because few people identified as "very familiar" and there was overarching consensus between groups.

Participant Major Distribution

- 1 Anthropology
- 1 Classics
- 2 Computer Science
- 1 Economics
- 1 Film and Media
- 1 German
- 1 Global health
- 1 Hispanic studies
- 1 History
- 2 Psychology
- 1 Philosophy
- 1 Politics
- 1 Sociology
- 1 Undeclared

*Participants could choose more than one major

Methods

Focus Group Research was Semi-standardized & Consistent with User Experience (UX) Research Methods

- We began with a set of interview questions to present to students, then allowed for "ideation" - brainstorming for potential other topics to discuss or expand upon while conversing with students
- Groups were recorded over zoom, where they were then transcribed using the audio/video editing software Descript. Researchers reviewed and edited transcripts as needed.
- Transcriptions were coded manually and using the software Nvivo

Guiding Research Questions

*Numbers correlate to numbered main takeaways

"How can we include subjects beyond CS into a UX/Experience Design program within the liberal arts setting?"

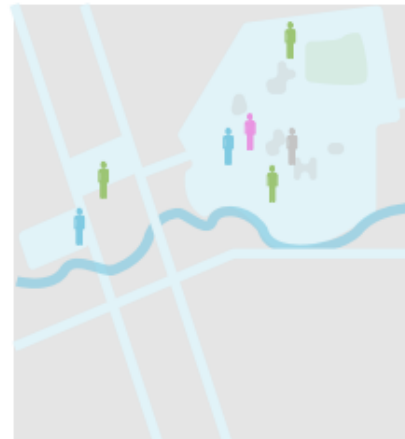
- Community outreach potential (5)
- Making the program interdisciplinary (4)

"What will make our UX program tailored to the liberal arts?" OR "Why would this major work in a liberal arts setting as opposed to others?"

- Providing opportunity not present at other Institutions (2)
- Liberal Arts model means we can mold the focus between digital & non-digital, making the program uniquely interdisciplinary. (3 & 4)

"How do we attract students to the program?"

- Offer to all students, make accessible (1)
- Promote as an up-and-coming career (2)
- Present as an opportunity to engage in community (5)



Main Takeaways

1

Accessibility



Participants expressed that the structure of the program should encourage all Whitman students to participate.

"...make sure, there's some spots open for people that feel they could benefit from it, but don't want to minor, major, or concentrate."

"[For people who...] have an interest in CS and art but don't know which major would suit them the most (like, they really don't want to go deep into CS or didn't want you to go deep into design), [this program] could be very useful for appealing to opposite sides of the spectrum."

5

Social Impact



Students felt strongly that the program should consider social impact, both within the Walla Walla community, and its larger context.

"I'm wondering if maybe internships or work opportunities could be incorporated into a program like this in which design, like people could get real life experience with design."

"I feel like a lot of the overarching problems we talk about are like systemic problems. Like the access to technology and like phones, computers, et cetera, and all like the kind of socio-political impacts of digitization on society.."

2

Future Need



Students thought Whitman could better serve their interests with this area of study and recognize its future importance.

"I was looking into design thinking at the time and specifically the Stanford d.school and their program. I did it out of there being a lack of it at Whitman."

"Climate change is rapidly approaching and there needs to be design solutions for that. And also all solutions. The increase in job growth in new fields just springing out of nowhere. I think that there is the aspect of timeliness...Whitman kinda needs to kind of stay with the times and address issues that are most pressing for people globally."

4

Interdisciplinary



Students believed the major should extend across multiple departments.

"I imagine that a class on digital studies could veer into economics or politics, sociology areas too."

"If this program were to be at Whitman, it would have to be interdisciplinary... to go along with the liberal arts spirit that Whitman embraces. I think sectioning off a design department into just UX or just computer science might not attract as many people... we need all the people from different disciplines to inform the social dynamics of design"

3

Focus: Digital & Non-Digital



Students were more interested in the broader spectrum of design: digital and non-digital.

"...why experience design rather than just regular design?"

"I think that like a social media component of a digital studies program would be sublime."

"...experience can mean a digital experience and in-person, or like anything in between like, I think a lot about urban design."