Western Continuing Studies

Design Thinking
BSMG6214

Course Outline

Description:
In today's complex and fast-changing world, solving problems requires creativity, empathy, and experimentation. Design Thinking provides a human-centered framework to identify opportunities, generate innovative solutions, and create meaningful experiences.

This 6-week online course guides participants through all stages of Design Thinking, culminating in a portfolio documenting the redesign of an everyday product, service or organizational challenge. Students will apply observation, ideation, prototyping, and testing to develop a tangible solution while seeing the iterative design process unfold.

Course Goals:
By the end of this course, participants will:

- Apply all stages of the IDEO Design Thinking process to real-world challenges
- Develop creative, user-centered solutions to improve products or experiences
- Build a low-fidelity prototype demonstrating their solution
- Compile a portfolio capturing all stages of Design Thinking, insights, and reflections
- Observe and understand how solutions evolve iteratively through feedback and collaboration

Course Objectives: At the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Empathize: Observe and understand user needs and pain points
- Define: Articulate clear problem statements and user personas
- Ideate: Generate creative solutions using brainstorming techniques
- Prototype: Create tangible, low-fidelity representations of ideas
- Test: Gather feedback, iterate, and refine prototypes
- Reflect: Document learning and insights in a structured portfolio
- Observe the Process: Recognize how ideas and solutions evolve through the stages of Design Thinking and how iteration, feedback, and collaboration shape outcomes

Text:
There is no textbook in this course. All readings and resources will be made available through OWL.

Evaluation:
This is a graded course where a complete or incomplete will be issued. In order to receive a completion for this course, a student must:

- Complete six portfolio submissions: Includes all stages, prototype, feedback, and reflection (graded Complete/Incomplete)
- Engage in weekly discussions, peer feedback, and collaborative exercises
- Complete five quizzes (one for each unit)

This course outline is a sample only and is subject to change.

Policy on Cheating and Academic Misconduct:
Academic honesty is a cornerstone of conduct at Western University. We cannot have freedom of expression without integrity. Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences; please refer to the section on "Scholastic Offences" in the current University Academic Calendar, or on the web at http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca. Such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in this University or elsewhere (without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom the work is submitted). Students enrolled in non-degree courses are expected to abide by the University's code of conduct.

Code of Student Conduct:
The purpose of the Code of Student Conduct is to define the general standard of conduct expected of students registered at Western University, provide examples of behaviour that constitutes a breach of this standard of conduct, provide examples of sanctions that may be imposed, and set out the disciplinary procedures that the University will follow. For the complete Code of Student Conduct: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/board/code.pdf.

Plagiarism:
All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between Western University and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com).

How often will the instructor communicate with me?
The instructor will endeavor to respond to emails in 24 hours.

Policy on Late Assignments:
All portfolio assignments for this course are due at the end of the weekend (Sunday at 11:59 PM.) Assignments submitted after this deadline are considered late. All due dates are in the Brightspace calendar.

How do I hand in assignments?
All assignments will be submitted electronically through OWL using the assignment tool. Failure to meet deadlines without the instructor's written permission will be subject to the late assignment policy. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that all assignments forwarded to the instructor arrive before the due date. If you experience difficulty in submitting assignments through OWL, you are responsible for contacting the instructor.

When will I receive my grades?
Final grades will be available 2 weeks after the last scheduled day of the course. A grade report can be printed from myWCS.

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Western Digital Badge
If you have met the course requirements for this Western approved micro-credential, you will receive an email from MyCreds to claim your digital badge. Badges are embedded with data that verifies your skills and achievements. Share them with your employer, on LinkedIn and other social media sites.

Course Schedule:

Week	Focus	Portfolio Deliverables
1	Introduction & empathize	Photos/videos, observation notes
2	Define	Problem Statement, Persona
3	Ideate	Brainstormed ideas, sketches/mind maps
4	Prototype	Low-fidelity prototype
5	Test & refine	Feedback report, refined prototype
6	Final Presentation & Reflection	Completed portfolio, summary, final prototype presentation

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