

PPHA 31950 Design for Social Impact

Spring 2018, Tuesdays, 3-5:50pm, Room 289B

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Course Description

Human-Centered Design is an established approach to service and systems development in the private and public sectors alike. Chicago and neighboring communities have complex social issues that could be re-examined through the use of design methods that facilitate human-centered research, visualization of ideas, co-design, and prototyping new approaches.

This course will focus on equipping students with Human-Centered Design skills applicable to public policy, by employing creative thinking. The most effective way to develop these skills is by applying them to existing projects and ongoing initiatives that students are involved with i.e. through the university, their employment or volunteer work. Broadly, this course will be structured as a workshop geared towards giving students practical experience planning and implementing (qualitative) design research, analyzing data, developing design concepts based on research insights and prototyping these with partner organizations.

Learning Objectives

In completing this course, you will gain proficiency in using design to apply a human-centered perspective to social impact work. At the end of this experience, you'll have:

1. a solid understanding of methods and instruments necessary to conduct design research
2. the ability to analyze qualitative research findings and develop design recommendations based on this analysis
3. experience synthesizing research insights to develop human-centered design concepts
4. the opportunity to facilitate co-design in an effort to “learn by making” or prototyping your design ideas with partner organizations.

Who Should Participate in this Course

This course is recommended for public policy students with an interest in gaining proficiency in Human-Centered Design. Participants will be encouraged to apply what they learn to their projects on an ongoing basis.

Format

This course will be structured as a workshop. Each session will generally consist of:

- a discussion of the previous week's assignment
- regular student presentations outlining project progress (see schedule below)
- a guest speaker or presentation given by faculty
- working sessions for project teams
- a detailed reading list will be provided to students during the first class.



Class Schedule

This workshop will be divided into 3 main work phases:

1. Design Research + Analysis (3 weeks)
2. Design Synthesis (2 weeks)
3. Co-Design + Prototype Testing (5 weeks)

3.27.18 | Research + Analysis | Developing a Design Research Plan

In this session students will be introduced to design research as a methodology and will be exposed to a number of examples of how design has been successfully applied to public policy work. We will form teams, discuss the design brief and will begin developing a research plan to be initiated by students.

***Assignment:** Each team will develop a research plan and draft of a research protocol following meetings with partner organizations. Please be prepared to present your research plans and protocol drafts next week.*

Readings:

1. TBA

4.3.18 | Research + Analysis | Analyzing Qualitative Data

In this session, there will be a presentation given on analyzing qualitative data. Teams will report on meetings with community organizations and will present their research plans and protocols during class.

***Assignment:** Implement refined research plan, documenting observations and insights in preparation for visualization and design synthesis.*

Readings:

1. TBA

4.10.18 | Research + Analysis | Visualizing Research Findings

In this session, there will be a presentation given on visualizing research findings. Teams will report on research efforts and their analyses of research findings.

***Assignment:** Prepare presentation outlining research findings and insights.*

Readings:

1. TBA



4.17.18 | Design Synthesis | Presentation of Research Findings

In this session, teams will present research findings and key insights germane to upcoming design activities. During this phase of the project you will give the insights emanating from your research form by developing design recommendations and then concepts based on these. A presentation will be given during class on how to develop design concepts and recommendations guided by research insights.

Assignment: *Identify design recommendations based on insights from research findings and begin brainstorming design concepts based on these.*

Readings:

1. TBA

4.24.18 | Design Synthesis | Concept Development & Refinement

Teams will informally present design recommendations and preliminary concepts to the class.

Assignment: *Pick the most promising design concepts and develop refined sketches to further explain design ideas.*

5.1.18 | Co-Design + Prototype Testing | Critique of Concepts

In this class, you will present your design concepts in class in order to benefit from a critique. A presentation will be given on how to prototype design concepts to aid in refinement and specifically, how Living Labs have been used successfully in the public sector.

Assignment: *Based on feedback, begin developing a plan for prototyping your design concepts in the field.*

Readings:

1. TBA

5.8.18 | Co-Design + Prototype Testing | Working Session

Teams will discuss and finalize their prototyping plans during this session and a presentation will be given on design nudges and how these are used in crafting public policy.

Assignment: *Test prototypes in the field.*

Readings:

1. TBA



5.15.18 | Co-Design + Prototype Testing | Working Session

Discuss prototype testing activities and refinements to process if necessary.

Assignment: *Test prototypes in the field.*

5.22.18 | Co-Design + Prototype Testing | Working Session

Discuss prototype testing activities and refinements to process if necessary.

Assignment: *Prepare presentation to discuss prototype testing results and refined design concepts. Each team will need to include recommendations for continuation of prototyping and/or Living Lab activities for clients they have been working with.*

5.29.18 | Co-Design + Prototype Testing | Working Session

In this class you will continue preparing your presentation by summarizing prototype testing results and visualizing refined design concepts. Each team will need to include recommendations for continuation of prototyping and/or Living Lab activities for clients they have been working with.

6.5.18 | Final Presentation

You will present your final designs to the class and, if possible, to community organizations you have worked with this quarter. If in-person attendance isn't feasible, we will explore the option of including clients by video conference.

Grading Standards and Criteria

Each student will be graded individually based on:

33% Class attendance, participation in discussions and other contributions
67% Project work and assignments

ADA Student Accommodations

Any student who believes they may need assistance should inform the Office of Student Disability Services by the end of the first week of class. Once you have received an accommodation letter, it should be presented to the course instructor immediately. <https://disabilities.uchicago.edu/>