

SoTL Grant Application Form

(2018-2019)

To be considered for funding, your research proposal must align with the following definition of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, SoTL, endorsed by the University Faculty Council in January of 2014:

"The rigorous investigation of student learning, with the purpose of developing novel teaching methodologies and practices that can lead to the measurable enhancement of student learning. The results of the investigation are made public through quality scholarly outlets and widely-accepted conferences and general or discipline-specific journals."

Proposals are due to the Office for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment by Friday, September 14th, 2018 and should be [submitted online](#). Award recipients will be notified by Friday, October 5th, 2018. Selected recipients will need to submit a final report for the grant project to TLA by September 1st, 2019.

I. Basic Information

Title of Project: GD101 Creative Studio Methods: A Case Study

Investigator(s) Information

Principal Investigator:

Name: Jessica Westbrook

College: College of Computing and Digital Media (CDM)

Department: School of Design

Phone Number: 708-228-7101 (mobile)

Email Address: jwestbro@cdm.depaul.edu

Other Investigators (Co-Pi):

Name	College	Department
Adam Trowbridge	College of Computing and Digital Media (CDM)	School of Design
Filipo Sharevski	College of Computing and Digital Media (CDM)	School of Computing

For each investigator, please include an abbreviated CV using the SoTL grant CV template.

Will your project involve human subjects? Yes

If Yes, you must include evidence of IRB approval or exemption, or of having applied for IRB approval or exemption. Please note that before any granted funding can be made available, you will be required to provide evidence of IRB approval or exemption. **IRB exemption is submitted for review / in progress.**

Requested Funds

Amount Requested (up to \$2,500): \$1700

II. Project Abstract (250 words or less)

GD 101: Creative Studio Methods is an interdisciplinary foundation level design course. Course materials and activities are designed to immerse students in a range of unfamiliar experiences and speculative futures while introducing methods for recognizing and generating ideas. Student flexibility, self-efficacy, autonomy, and dialectical thinking are some of the high-level course goals. The development of GD 101: Creative Studio Methods was prompted by trends in student behavior and motivation over the past decade and by projected trends suggesting that machine learning and artificial intelligence will automate and impact future professional practices. The course is intended to spark human creativity in a population of students who have previously learned to work towards rubrics and standardized tests. Current student learning outcomes include: experience uncertainty; generate ideas, mistakes, and surprises through art, design and research prompts, process, and constraints; identify design decisions and make design decisions; discover intrinsic motivations; engage divergent thinking to push boundaries or initiate creative directions; adapt or transform creative studio methods to meet needs. Are we meeting course goals and outcomes? Since our course is new, unique, unpredictable and incorporates studio art and design thinking approaches we will use a case study research design to capture the wide array of individualized student experiences and outcomes. The case study will use purposive samples through project deliverables including project cycle documentation, artifacts, reflections (posted to D2L); in class observations (activity engagement, process, production, and group critiques); semi-structured interviews (drawing questions informed by Fink's taxonomy); concurrent data collection; and divergent thinking analysis (drawing approaches informed by Divergent Thinking tests).

III. Project Description (1000 words or less)

Purpose of Project

Describe your research project.

1. *Please provide a clear statement of the teaching-learning issue that you want to investigate, and explain briefly why this issue warrants a systematic and rigorous investigation.*

In 2017-2018 we introduced GD 101: Creative Studio Methods in DePaul's School of Design. GD101 is an interdisciplinary foundation level design course geared towards beginners and open to all DePaul undergraduate students. Course materials and activities are designed to immerse students in a range of unfamiliar experiences and speculative futures while introducing methods for recognizing and generating ideas. Student flexibility, self-efficacy, autonomy, and dialectical thinking are some of the high-level course goals. The development of GD 101: Creative Studio Methods was motivated by observed trends in student behavior and motivation over the past decade. Sentiments are captured in the 2011 article, "The creativity crisis: The decrease in creative thinking scores on the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking," written for the Creativity Research Journal. According author Dr. KH Kim, Professor of Creativity and Innovation at the College of William & Mary, "the decrease in creative thinking in the past 20 to 30 years was due to decreased psychological safety and freedom in the home and school environments, over-scheduling of structured activities and academic-focused programs, increased interaction with electronic entertainment devices rather than human beings, and increased emphasis on standardized testing." GD 101: Creative Studio Methods attempts to interrupt conditions resulting from over-scheduling and standards, including features like diminished intrinsic motivation and learned helplessness. The introduction of GD 101: Creative Studio Methods was also motivated by projected trends impacting the future of professional practices. The World Economic Forum anticipates artificial intelligence (AI) and automation impacting most labor markets. In their The Future of Jobs 2016 report the organization ranks the ten skills you need to thrive in the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The first three are: Complex problem solving, Critical thinking, and Creativity. Corporations like Google and IBM are already working hard at engineering AI scenarios that can perform and create visual art and design, media, music, entertainment, experiences, and complex solutions. What happens when systems are capable of accessing all knowledge, learning, adapting, applying, and making new connections? Where does that leave us? GD 101: Creative Studio Methods attempts to foreground unique human sensibilities and attributes like vulnerability, empathy, inquiry, and criticality.

GD 101: Creative Studio Methods is a new ambitious course in its second year. In class "Studio Labs" emphasize response, playful risk, interpretation, and agility. Out of class "Life Labs" emphasize intention, observation, and discovery. Visual and conceptual artifacts, documents, and outcomes are produced through process and experimentation, and considered through self-reflection and group discussion. Short conversations, screenings, and readings introduce models, contexts, and inspiration for creative and critical design practices and provide students with courage by example. Current student learning outcomes include: experience uncertainty; generate ideas, mistakes, and surprises through prompts, process, and constraints; identify design decisions and make design decisions; discover intrinsic motivations; engage divergent thinking to push boundaries or initiate creative directions; adapt or transform creative studio methods to meet needs. What is happening in the GD 101: Creative Studio Methods course and are activities meeting course goals and student outcomes? A formal study is needed.

2. *State, in clear and measurable terms, a Research Question to indicate specifically what it is that you want to know as a result of this investigation.*

How can we improve GD 101: Creative Studio Methods course activities to meet course goals and student outcomes?

Theoretical Framework

Explain how your proposed research builds on or fits into existing relevant literature. Provide a brief but comprehensive bibliography as an appendix.

Our theoretical framework is multidimensional and intentionally complex intersecting creativity models and methods based in immersive art studio practice and design thinking practice, pragmatism, critical social theory, and critical pedagogy, while incorporating lenses and themes like feminism, queer theory, and social justice as well as student contributed inquiry and discourse. Pragmatism builds on the contributions of figures like Dewey, emphasizes experience, and views knowledge, "as arising from an active adaptation of the human organism to its environment." Critical social theory builds on the contributions of figures like Marx and "characteristically rejects mainstream political and intellectual views, criticizes capitalism, promotes human liberation, and consequently attempts to expose domination and oppression in their many forms" (Gale, 2018). Critical pedagogy builds on the contributions of figures like Freire. It is in essence a teaching method or pedagogy that challenges social oppression, and is critical of the established order (Braa and Callero, 2006). Art and design practice combined with experience, and critical approaches form a flexible responsive environment for creative "out of bounds" activity. Feminism, queer theory, and social justice, as well as student contributed inquiry and discourse, are necessary features in any contemporary conversation involving identity, behavior, and participation the current social landscape.

Research Methodology

Describe the research design you have chosen to answer your research question, and briefly explain why it is appropriate for this project. Make sure to indicate the kind of data that will be collected, how it will be collected, and how it will be analyzed.

Since our course is new, unique, and unpredictable we will use a case study research design that incorporates the experiences and outcomes of participants. The case/unit is the Spring 2019 section of GD 101: Creative Studio Methods. Our intent is to discover what is happening in this new course and determine how we can improve activities to meet course goals and outcomes.

The case study will use purposive samples and typical case sampling through required lab project deliverables including documentation, artifacts, reflections (posted on D2L); in class observations (activity engagement, process, production); semi-structured interviews with volunteers during midterm week and during finals week (drawing questions from Fink's taxonomy); concurrent data collection and analysis (taking copious notes mapped to each project cycle, finding themes and patterns, and coding); and finally interpretation and dissemination of case study findings (being conscious of the potential for participant/evaluator bias). Sample semi-structured interview questions include: How would

you summarize the first project cycles? What decisions did you make? What did you have to figure out on your own? How can you connect project cycle ideas and experiences with further art, design, or research activity/contexts? What did you learn about yourself and others in the project cycles? How has your outlook changed? What ideas or experiences do you care about now? In the longer term we can repeat this study with future sections of GD 101: Creative Studio Methods.

Impact of Project

Assuming successful completion of this project, please describe how the results of the proposed research could help in the development of teaching methodologies or practices aimed at improving student learning in measurable ways.

The results of the proposed research can be used to refine, augment, or invent curriculum and course activities related to creativity. This material will be disseminated and can be adopted for use in a wide array of learning scenarios. Ultimately results can be used to support the growth and development of student flexibility, self-efficacy, autonomy, and dialectical thinking in any course that might benefit from creativity methods.

Dissemination of Results

Describe how you plan to share the results of your project, within and/or outside of the DePaul community.

We plan to share the focused results of this project with DePaul communities including School of Design, CDM, COE, Teaching and Learning Conference(s) and submit proposals to national and international education, design, and art conferences including American Educational Research Association (AERA), American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA), College Art Association (CAA), as well as creativity research publications like Creativity Research Journal and The Journal of Creative Behavior.

IV. Project Plan and Timeline

*Describe the proposed project plan and timeline. *Please note all 2017-2018 grant funds need to be used by the end of the fiscal year.*

Fall 2018

Review, revise, augment, test existing GD 101: Creative Studio Methods course content and activities.
Record and review course notes.

Winter 2019

Divergent thinking research, Torrance Test training (two faculty)
Relate Torrance instruments/divergent thinking assessments to GD 101 course notes from Fall
Revise research & IRB approval as necessary

Spring 2019

Run research project course, make observations, do interviews

Summer 2019

Analyze results, write reports, disseminate results

V. Budget

Provide a detailed, itemized budget of how proposed funds will be used.

Registration fees for teaching workshops directly related to the research question being addressed in the project:
Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking (TTCT) Training University of Georgia
Figural registration fee \$500 x2 and Verbal registration fee: \$350 x2: total \$1700

Appendix A: Bibliography

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