**Proposing a Course or Activity for inclusion on the EL Transcript**

**University of Georgia**

**Design Thinking Elective**

**ENTR 5090**

**Experiential Learning Proposal**

**In CAPA, included the following information under “Non-traditional format.”**

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING SUMMATION

1. This course should be included as an approved EL transcript in the CREATIVE area.
2. Engagement: Much of the course, especially the second half will involve external (away from the campus) focused activities studying and acting upon *challenges* found in the empirical environment and proposing SOLUTIONS. Students will act BOTH individually and in groups evaluating *challenges* in which they can personally connect or relate. What is meant by “challenge” in design thinking is a problem or an issue facing people, society or the environment. Challenges can be as short and simple as 1-2 hours such as an in-class exercise whereby students form small groups to discuss solutions – say how to effectively network during class time or how-to best use technology to deliver content that is meaningful to students. Other are mid-range and can last for a few days to a few weeks. A recent example was to design a solution to keep dogs comfortable and safe in a car during summer without leaving the car engine on. Longer challenges take weeks, months or even years. For class it will be a 10-week task. For example, a recent class designed a new immersion process for Veterans leaving the service and coming to University as Freshman. Another example was examining the Athens downtown shopping experience and how to make improvement, especially considering an impending 18-month street renovation project. The final recommendations were poster boarded and presented to a local Downtown Development Authority. A more complete list of externally focused projects using Design Thinking, including presentations to business and community leaders follows in the appendix at the end.
3. Mentorship: Students will evaluate and assess challenges in the environment and reflect or analyze them via several essays. The instructor will provide detailed feedback on how design thinking tools were applied in their rational and recommendation. There will also be peer reviews done in class on weekly subject matter that individuals or groups will present, all supervised and reviewed by the instructor. Finally, in class guest lectures will challenge students to think critically and assess specific complex situations. Dependent on the final challenge we will cover at least two of the learning outcomes (i.e. say a group assesses a UN global challenge it will cover social awareness whereas other challenges may not). Each is described below.
4. Challenge: Students will engage with the external environment (away from campus) such as community or business leaders, affected persons and organizations in Athens, Atlanta or Georgia. They will have multiple assignments outside the building and will report and recommend on what they find. They will practice design thinking tools outside the confines of the lecture facility or campus. Examples include conducting discovery, the process of interviewing archetypes (or sometime just by observations or in others using an immersion) regarding a specific problem, by asking open ended questions. Groups will share feedback via poster boarding where a synthesis of the posters will ensue. In the Athens shopping example, the separate groups conducted the same exercise, each offered recommendations with some crossover but there were distinct features of the discovery unique to individual groups. The final phase would be to consolidate the three sets of recommendations into one final set of recommendations suggested for implementations. Another tool includes rapid prototyping. In the dog care case the students drafted a visual of various solutions such as a battery-operated fan that used a thermostat to start or a gel mat with cooling material inside, activated when the dog steps or sits on it. In other cases, simple materials such as cloth, cardboard and wood are crudely assembled to represent a desired object. Today the emergence of 3D printing aids in this development. Mapping is yet one more tool whereby students ask questions of the impacted group and draft process maps in order to visualize overlap and gaps. Stakeholder maps is another mapping tool where we depict, often with colors and size, the impacted stakeholders of a problem/solution and their relative affiliation with the subject at hand.
5. Ownership: To begin with students will opt for world challenges they are personally passionate about, such as specific aspects of global warming, health and nutrition, war, social justice and more. Students will be taught a set of design thinking tools from which they must chose those that best fit the proposed challenges. Activities such as field work, interviewing, observation and secondary research are a subset of tools they will choose to use to greater and lesser extents and visual tools will also be required such as personas, stakeholder maps, process maps and prototypes of final solutions. The typical way to get started is for the student teams to draft a FIELD GUIDE. This documents the hypothesis the team wishes to test, its goals, roles and responsibilities of each participant and lists the specific tool to be used (i.e. interviewing versus immersion or observation; it might also be whether to use visuals (sketches, poster boards, etc.) versus 3D printed objects or rough prototypes). The projects are intended to be empirically focused and as such affected/interested parties will be involved and invited to final presentations and/or sent the recommendations. As noted above, the Director of a local Downtown Development Authority attended the final presentations on the shopping experience. A recent honors project studied how to use developing clean energy technologies in non-profits with the suggestions delivered to a local charity. Other possibilities include student teams applying to the UGA Idea Accelerator to further test the commercialization of their solution or a CURO student researching University incubators with a goal of using the findings to seek grants to further research and develop new incubation models. While honors and CURO are not this class, the same efforts could be class projects.
6. Awareness: We prefer the student choose challenges that are personal in some way so they can place themselves emotionally within the context of the situations. That was the case for example with the Veteran assimilation into University project. In all cases the projects require the use of tools that include journalizing and logging activities. We will also conduct peer reviews of work in and outside the classroom. It is intended that final proposed solutions, complete with prototypes can be delivered to an intended external recipient, such as a community leader, executive with a business organization or non-profit director. That could be as simple as a social impact action for University students delivered to a UGA college or campus oversight group to ideas that might be sent to public official or even the UN. In any case, the final project is presented in class and peer reviewed and well as assessed with feedback by the instructor. Some projects (like the incubator research) would be fit for submission to a publication or professional/academic conference.