

# GRA 6931c | research & practice | syllabus

<b>Meets</b>	W 5-7 (11:45am–2:45pm) in MxD studio, Infinity Hall
<b>Instructor</b>	Dr Dori Griffin   dgriffin@arts.ufl.edu   FAC 313E
<b>Prerequisites</b>	MxD student co-registered for MxD Seminar, or instructor permission
<b>Office hours</b>	M/W 9:00–9:30, M 1:00–2:30 and by appointment

I regularly check/reply to email in the early morning and late afternoon M-F. I'm happy to make an appointment to meet outside regular office hours; DM me on Teams to work out a time.

## This course, the TL;DR:

In this course, we'll design better, together, by **practicing** research through **co-designed** thinking, doing, and **iterative** making. Our design research will be supported by a diverse and energetic **literature review** which will include not only journal articles and book chapters, but also blogs, Ted Talks, online lectures, podcasts, popular journalism, digital exhibits, and recorded interviews. Guided but not limited by existing models and concepts, we'll **collaborate** with **communities** to co-design solutions to real and urgent **challenges** facing them and us. Our **guiding principles** will be: design with joy, experiment freely, collaborate fully, demonstrate respect, and communicate clearly. All assignments and supporting materials will be posted to Canvas.

## Texts & materials:

Required: Links to all required readings and viewings will be posted to Canvas.  
Suggested: Follow D-Scout's [People Nerds](#) (methodology) & the [Design Justice Network](#) (principles in practice).

## Catalog description:

GRA 6193c: Research & Practice. Rotating topics course focused on the integration of research and practice to address complex problems within diverse contexts. The study and use of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods appropriate for an expanded practice are addressed through discussions, case studies, writing, fieldwork, and presentations.

## Course learning objectives:

This course fosters knowledge building and skill development in the following areas:

1. Design: Develop a body of work(s) which includes visual communications artifacts, design systems, and design strategies and reflects original, creative, and innovative contributions.
2. Research: Identify and apply research concepts, methods, and activities that are contextual, respectful, and advance a co-design framework. Pursue visual research in the form of process-driven iterations and informed by a literature review.
3. Communication: Creates a portfolio that organizes and communicates research, findings, proposals, and work products at a professional level with their intended audience using visual, verbal, and written skills. Disseminate research findings in public to further participate in disciplinary discourse.
4. Working with People: Collaborates and works effectively in interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary teams to develop approaches and solutions to complex problems.
5. Specialization: Develops expertise in an area of one's choosing to support professional goals (the "and" in "Design and \_\_\_\_\_").

## Required materials:

Students studying in the Design and Visual Communications MFA program are required to have appropriate hardware, software, and access to the Internet and perform design and design-related tasks, including access to UF's Canvas, UF GSuite/Google Drive, Teams, OneDrive, and Adobe Creative Cloud. See this website for more details regarding hardware, software, specifications, and some purchasing options, including discounts for UF students. Because computer access is an institutional requirement, computer costs are designated as allowable costs for students who

qualify for Financial Aid. Accordingly, Student Financial Affairs has added costs for access to a computer into budgets. For more information, contact your financial adviser in the Office of Student Financial Affairs directly.

### Coursework:

As designers who conduct research and practice design in our community, and communicate our process to design colleagues and community members, we're constantly building **relationships**, learning from lived **experiences**, and developing new **methods** (or refining existing ones) that allow us to co-design better futures with and within our communities. Our focus is on developing **horizontal** co-design methodologies and practices in the local context of Gainesville and supported by a rich and richly documented **process** of research, literature review, and experiential learning. Use the Chicago Manual of Style (author, date) for all materials. Graded coursework includes the following; see individual assignments on Canvas for details:

#### Presentations (25%)

Visual, audio-visual, and/or written presentations for internal (program) and external (peer, public) dissemination. Presentations include project progress reports for peer/instructor feedback, presentations for project partners, and written and audio-visual case study reports for public dissemination.

#### Process (25%)

Weekly personal research blog posts documenting field work, design iterations, and lessons learned; 1:1 progress meetings with faculty, as scheduled; literature reviews, as assigned.

#### Projects (50%)

Framing / development / production of co-designed deliverables in collaboration with community partner(s). Work with a partner organization or institution to operationalize participatory, horizontal social design within a community. Work either individually or in pairs, accountable to stakeholders both internal (MxD) and external (community collaborators).

### Grading scale:

The grading scale for this course is consistent with the current UF policy for assigning grade points which can be viewed at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

Letter	GPA	Percent	Letter	GPA	Percent
A	4.00	100-95%	C	2.00	76-73%
A-	3.67	94-90%	C-	1.67	72-70%
B+	3.33	89-87%	D+	1.33	69-67%
B	3.00	86-83%	D	1.00	66-63%
B-	2.67	82-80%	D-	0.67	62-60%
C+	2.33	79-77%	F	0.00	59% or below

### Course structure:

This course meets **1x/wk** in the studio . We'll use this time to discuss assigned readings and viewings and to report on and give feedback about work in progress (see course schedule). You're expected to spend a minimum of 3hrs/wk in the field doing **fieldwork**, as defined by your specific community co-design project, and to **document** this time in your research blog. (Example: volunteering weekly at PYB if you're working with PYB.) You should also expect to spend 3-6hrs/wk outside of class on research, which includes assigned reading/viewing, ongoing design iterations, preparing presentations for the cohort and for community collaborators, and maintaining your personal research blog. As a studio course, flagged by its **c-designation** in the catalog, this course applies the studio credit hours model: weekly distribution of 6 contact hours and 6 out-of-class hours. Your personal fieldwork time is counted as "contact hours."

### Deliverables / outcomes:

This course prioritizes (1) active **engagement** in scheduled class meetings – demonstrated by attendance and participation, presentation of **progress reports** for peer/instructor feedback, and maintenance of your personal **research blog**; (2) commitment to weekly **fieldwork** with your community partner(s) including blog **documentation**; (3) **co-designed outcomes** based on iterative collaboration with community partner(s) to solve problems as

co-defined through ongoing engagement; and (4) final documentation in the form of a **case study** suitable for publication in a trade outlet or scholarly journal or presentation at a design conference.

#### **Course policies:**

**Attendance:** Being present for class allows you to participate in the co-design community that supports the MxD. Each unexcused absence will reduce the final course grade by 5/100 points, or half a letter grade. Check in via email ahead of time to make specific and mutually agreeable arrangements if you must miss class but don't anticipate official documentation. Otherwise, official documentation of university-approved circumstances is required for absences to be excused. For example, illness is excused via doctor's note, university travel via confirmation from the travel supervisor (as DGS, this is sometimes me), religious observances via a copy of the service program, etc. Two late arrivals or early departures will equal one absence. More than six absences results in automatic failure of the course, unless we've made arrangements ahead of time to accommodate ongoing, documented situations.

**Accommodations:** Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/> It's important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester. (If there's something I/we can do that you know to be helpful and functional for you, feel free to let me know informally.)

**Make-up presentations + activities:** Presentations can only be made up in the case of documented emergencies or for university approved reasons such as military/university travel, illness, or religious observances; contact me ahead of time to make arrangements. Read the full university policies regarding attendance, excused absences, and make-up exams at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

**Academic integrity:** If you use words, images, or ideas that are not your own, cite them. Claiming the work of others as your own is a serious breach of professional ethics and will result in a failing grade in this class. The UF Honor Code specifies a number of other behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. View the Honor Code online: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

**Course evaluations:** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last 2-3 weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

**UF in-class recording policy:** Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor. A class lecture does not include lab/studio sessions, student presentations, academic exercises involving solely student participation, or private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

**UF HB7 guidance:** People learn best when encouraged to ask questions and express their diverse insights on course content which may include images, texts, data, or theories from many fields. This class addresses concepts of race, color, sex, and/or national origin as related to design. We study these important issues because understanding them is essential for anyone who seeks to make economic, cultural, and societal contributions to today's complex world. With this in mind, we do not limit access to, or classroom discussion of, ideas and opinions—including those that some may find uncomfortable or even offensive. In response to challenging material, students and instructors are encouraged to ask honest questions and thoughtfully engage one another's ideas. But hostility and disruptive or disrespectful behavior have no place in a classroom, and we will respect one another's full humanity throughout this course.

## **Campus resources:**

### *Emergency Contacts*

UF Police: Emergency 911, non-emergency 352-392-1111 or <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

UF Counseling and Wellness Center: 352-392-1575 or <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/>

UF 24/7 Crisis Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Emergency-Services>

### *Student Healthcare Center*

Dial 911 for medical emergencies

Dial 352-392-1161 for urgent after-hours medical questions

Dial 352-392-1171 for after-hours mental health assistance, <http://shcc.ufl.edu>

### *Academic Services*

Most policies and procedures important to students recorded here: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138; <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

# GRA 6931c / spring 2023 / course schedule

## **Week 1 / January 11 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: pre-readings and fieldwork pre-experience deliverables due (=blog post #1)  
Seminar and Research & Practice meet together Weeks 1-2  
Thursday 1/12 12:30-3:30pm Project YouthBuild Mural Project (re-introductions; activities = "what designers do")

## **Week 2 / January 18 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #2; fieldwork post-experience deliverables due  
Seminar and Research & Practice meet together Weeks 1-2

## **Week 3 / January 25 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #3, preparing project proposals  
Thursday 1/26 12:30-3:30pm Project YouthBuild Mural Project Workshop 1

## **Week 4 / February 1 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #4, ongoing project work  
Presentation 1: project proposals

## **Week 5 / February 8 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #5, ongoing project work  
Thursday 2/09 12:30-3:30pm Project YouthBuild Mural Project Workshop 2

## **Week 6 / February 15 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #6, ongoing project work  
Read & respond #1

## **Week 7 / February 22 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #7, ongoing project work  
Thursday 2/23 12:30-3:30pm Project YouthBuild Mural Project Workshop 3

## **Week 8 / March 1 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #8, ongoing project work  
Informal peer feedback session

## **Week 9 / March 8 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #9, ongoing project work  
Presentation 2: Project progress reports  
Thursday 3/09 12:30-3:30pm Project YouthBuild Mural Project (final session)

## **Week 10 / March 15 (Wednesday)**

SPRING BREAK

**Week 11 / March 22 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #11, ongoing project work  
Read & Respond #2

**Week 12 / March 29 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #12, ongoing project work  
Informal peer feedback session

**Week 13 / April 5 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #13, ongoing project work  
Read & Respond #3

**Week 14 / April 12 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: process blog post #14, ongoing project work  
Read & Respond #4

**Week 15 / April 19 (Wednesday)**

In-studio collaborative work time  
No process blog this week

**Week 16 / April 26 (Wednesday)**

Assignments: feedback session for public-facing print/screen case studies—bring printed proofs

**FINALS (TBD)**

Written case studies for public dissemination due  
Presentation 3: A/V case study presentations to internal MxD audience