

WORKING WITH DESIGN CLIENTS



**TOOLS AND ADVICE
FOR SUCCESSFUL
PARTNERSHIPS**

MEAGHAN DEE AND JESSICA MEHARRY

B L O O M S B U R Y

Working with design clients:
*Tools and advice for
successful partnerships*

MEAGHAN DEE AND JESSICA MEHARRY

WITH CHAPTER 3 WRITTEN BY NAJLA MOUCHREK

BLOOMSBURY VISUAL ARTS
LONDON • NEW YORK • OXFORD • NEW DELHI • SYDNEY

BLOOMSBURY VISUAL ARTS
Bloomsbury Publishing Plc
50 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3DP, UK
1385 Broadway, New York, NY 10018, USA
29 Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2, Ireland

BLOOMSBURY, BLOOMSBURY VISUAL ARTS
and the Diana logo are trademarks of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc

First published in Great Britain 2024

Copyright © Jessica Meharry and Meaghan Dee, 2024

For legal purposes the Image credits on p.224 constitute an extension of this copyright page.

Cover design: Meaghan Dee

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publishers.

Bloomsbury Publishing Plc does not have any control over, or responsibility for, any third-party websites referred to or in this book. All internet addresses given in this book were correct at the time of going to press. The author and publisher regret any inconvenience caused if addresses have changed or sites have ceased to exist, but can accept no responsibility for any such changes.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.
A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

Working with design clients: Tools and advice for successful partnerships
was authored by Meaghan Dee and Jessica Meharry,
with Chapter 3 written by Najla Mouchrek.

ISBN: HB: 978-1-3503-5883-6
PB: 978-1-3503-5882-9
ePDF: 978-13503-5884-3
eBook: 978-1-3503-5885-0

Typeset by Meaghan Dee
Printed and bound in India

To find out more about our authors and books visit www.bloomsbury.com and sign up for our newsletters.

Acknowledgments

This book would not be possible without the contributions from other design educators, students, and researchers. In the early days of our research, the AIGA *Design Educators Community (DEC)* facilitated this project by hosting numerous events about student-run design studios. These events connected us with other educators and created support and community.

During her time on the DEC board, Meaghan found some of the greatest supporters, collaborators, mentors, and friends she could hope for. Additionally during that time, Meaghan, Anne H. Berry, Penina Laker, Rebecca Tegtmeier, and Kelly Walters co-created (with the DEC) the following pledge for design educators: “I commit to being anti-racist, to upholding all design histories, to distributing knowledge, to demonstrating impact, to creating culture, and to supporting student life experiences.” She hopes all educators can reflect on their own values and infuse them into their classes.

We also want to share our heartfelt gratitude to *Design Incubation* an organization that hosted a transformational writing fellowship (now run by *Writing Space*). Before, during, and after our participation in the fellowship program, Aaris Sherin and Robin Landa gave us advice, feedback, and encouragement. They also de-mystified the writing process and helped us break this project into manageable pieces. We remain overwhelmed by their kindness and generosity.

Jessica would like to thank Meaghan for continually reaching out to initiate this project and keep it going to the finish line. I would also like to thank all of my colleagues at Columbia College Chicago and IIT Institute of Design who supported me through these past few years. Finally, I am infinitely grateful for my partner, Ames, for their boundless love, guidance, patience, and wisdom.

Meaghan would like to thank Jessica for being an incredible collaborator. Thanks to Helen Armstrong, David Hisaya Asari, Anne H. Berry, Meena Khalili, Marty Maxwell Lane, Alberto Rigau, Kaleena Sales, Rebecca Tegtmeier, and Kelly Walters for always answering my questions and inspiring me through your own writing and research. I'm also grateful to my colleagues at Virginia Tech. Special thanks to my husband, Nick, for supporting my efforts and seeing the value in what I do. And love to our daughter, Finial, for reminding us what is important beyond work and for bringing us so much joy. Also love to our dog, Dexter; I miss you.

Lastly, we want to thank all of our students. We have learned so much from you. This book is for you.

PART 1

Why?



CHAPTER 1

Learning through experience 14

CHAPTER 2

Connecting to industry & community 26

CHAPTER 3

Becoming empowered 42
Chapter written by
Najla Mouchrek

PART 2

What?



CHAPTER 4

Engaging with communities 62

CHAPTER 5

Finding focus & targeting clients 82

CHAPTER 6

Achieving learning goals 96

PART 3

Who?



CHAPTER 7

Exploring work roles 112

CHAPTER 8

Establishing relationships 134

CHAPTER 9

Sustaining relationships 152

PART 4

How?



CHAPTER 10

Launching a studio 162

CHAPTER 11

Managing the money 178

CHAPTER 12

Planning for the future 198

PART 4 IS FOCUSED ON
THE MANAGEMENT AND
STRATEGIC PLANNING
OF FULL-FLEDGED
STUDENT-RUN STUDIOS.



Introduction

Real-world experience

*We learn to design by doing design. That's what design is—using ideas to bring something into the world. Or as design researcher Herbert Simon put it, to design is to “devise courses of action aimed at changing existing situations into preferred ones.”¹ So the question becomes, what kind of **doing** helps us learn how to design? We—design educators—incorporate many different kinds of doing depending on where you—design students—are in your program. As a beginning student, you explore doing design in studio classes, often starting with formal exercises to help you understand and master technical skills. Later in your program, you shift to experiential learning, collaborating on full-fledged design projects, often with external clients or partners. It's that kind of learning that we're focusing on in this book.*

Learning is most impactful when tied to real-world projects, which can serve as a gateway to professional practice. That's why working with communities and clients while in the safety of the classroom can be an excellent way to gain early experience. Getting started on client work can be tremendously challenging—but we're here to help! Throughout this book, we will share advice on everything from working with community partners and external clients, all the way to establishing a fully-operational student-run design studio. We will tackle the why, what, who, and how of client work in the design classroom, while sharing interviews and case studies from both faculty and students.

1. Simon, Herbert Alexander. 2008. *The Sciences of the Artificial*. Third edition. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

APPLIED ADVICE

*Design Streak Studio students at work with their faculty Creative and Art Director, Archana Shekara.
Photo credit: Lyndsie Schlick*

Who we are

Meaghan spent her first three years at Virginia Tech as the director of a student-run, faculty-led graphic design agency. She was essentially thrown into the deep end, jumping straight into running a fully operational studio with large-scale projects already underway. While systems were already in place, no one was available to train her on daily operations, so much of what she learned came from trial and error. She wished she'd had a guidebook available to help her during this time.

At the same time, Jessica was interested in creating a student-run design studio where she worked at Columbia College Chicago. She looked for guidance and

advice in books and articles, but she couldn't find much. So, she applied for and received a Faculty Research Grant from the AIGA Design Educators Community (DEC) to research what faculty members were already doing that was working well. Her goal was to share those findings in conference presentations and in an article and then begin the work of starting a studio.

As luck would have it, Meaghan was serving on the AIGA DEC board and saw Jessica's research. It's the typical story of how networking goes—"Hey, I'm interested in this, and you're interested in this. Let's do something together!" And here we are.

Who is this book for?

We wrote this book with students in mind, but many audiences can benefit from our research and advice:

Students: This book is a behind-the-scenes look at what it takes to tackle client work inside (and outside) the design classroom. Whether you're assuming a leadership position at your institution or just starting with your first client project, we wrote this book for you.

Faculty: This is the book we, the authors, wish we had when we were taking over a student-run design studio (Meaghan) and considering starting one (Jessica). We hope that this can help serve as a guide for any stage—from dreaming to revisioning.

Administrators: Working with clients and communities is complex and requires a lot of effort and planning. This book provides insights and can help you better understand what support might be needed and the benefits these endeavors can have for your institution.

Founders of design studios: While we center our work on examples in the classroom, many of the strategies and principles apply to establishing design studios outside the academy.

Why did we write this book?

Real-world client work is one of the most valuable activities students can engage in before graduation. It is an opportunity to see what it is really like to work as a designer and to practice adapting to unexpected hurdles. With the right mindset and mentorship, this work can set the foundation for empowerment and community connection.

There are hundreds of faculty-led, student-run graphic design and marketing agencies in the United States and around the world. Additionally, many more universities and institutions are working to establish new firms in these subject areas, and in emerging creative technologies such as augmented reality (AR), virtual reality (VR), and artificial intelligence (AI). Existing student-run firms face many challenges, including high student and faculty turnover, managing clients and budgets, and lack of administrative support. As a result, these studios are often just hanging on by a thread. This book provides faculty managers and students with the expertise and guidance needed to thrive. While many programs don't have the infrastructure or size to handle a full-fledged studio, students can still benefit from working with design clients. Whether integrating one client project in a course, dedicating an entire semester to working with community partners, or building a standalone studio, we will provide insight and practical tips for success.

This book will examine client work and design studios in the larger context of design education. Many faculty members who oversee client projects and design agencies get so caught up in daily fires and keeping the organization afloat that they don't have time to think about educational best practices and the relationship to broader curricula. We will offer guidance for managing studios and for helping to prepare for a complex future. We will also supply resources to aid student success. Throughout this book, we will provide:

1. **Methods** for integrating best teaching and learning practices into classroom-based client work (and student design studios) and methods for how to get the most out of experiential education opportunities.
2. **Advice** on how to launch, operate, and grow a student-run design firm and how to work with clients in the context of the design classroom.
3. **Resources** and tangible takeaways for students and educators, including sample timesheets, estimates, invoices, and evaluation forms.
4. **Support** for awareness, reflection, and self-care during a journey of empowerment throughout one's education.

Real-world experience

Educators strive to model the academic experience after the real-world practices of collaboration, client service, and design methodology. In the studio, students “learn by doing,” and practicums/studios are an ideal vehicle for teaching *how to design* and *how to pitch* work. Students learn from practice, actively working on projects and advancing through that process rather than solely by applying theory or style. In addition, many researchers and educators have found using “live” clients most beneficial. We’ve also heard directly from many employers how much the client experience makes students stand out from their peers.

Challenging but rewarding

While there are tremendous benefits to integrating client work and student studios into design programs, we won’t sugar-coat it—there are also incredible challenges. Project managers must worry about funding, resources, institutional support (or lack thereof), hiring and training students, and dealing with clients—just to name a few concerns. But our hope is that sharing experiences and expertise from those who have been working this way for years can help make it easier to navigate whatever might lie ahead.



FIGURE 0.1

Virginia Tech students Rachael Quan and Sydney Johnson participating in the design sprint, DesignUP.

How to use this book

Our primary audience for this book is our students, so we will write to “you.” At the same time, all of the information will be valuable to your instructors, so we include faculty perspectives on how to work with design clients in the classroom.

This book is divided into four sections:

1. Why?

The first section, *Why?*, explains the benefits of client work in the design classroom. The section situates classroom-based client work into the broader context of design education, and demonstrates how this education can best prepare students for industry. *Why?* also details how experiential education can be a path to empowerment for students.

2. What?

The second section, *What?*, focuses on the experiential work opportunities that are available—from engaging with communities, to working with clients. *What?* also details how you can structure client work within different programs and curricular requirements.

3. Who?

The third section, *Who?*, identifies who will be conducting the design work—students and their roles—and who they will be working with—clients. *Who?* also gives advice for getting stakeholder buy-in, such as how to sell the idea of client work in the design classroom to administrators or financial gatekeepers.

4. How?

The book’s last section, *How?*, specifically focuses on the management and strategic planning of full-fledged student-run studios. This section is geared toward those considering starting an agency, taking over an agency, or planning the future development of an existing agency.

Part one

Why?

CHAPTER 1

Learning through experience

CHAPTER 2

Connecting to industry & community

CHAPTER 3

Becoming empowered

HOW?

WHO?

WHAT?

WHY?

BRAINSTORMING

Virginia Tech students Grace Cheung and Emily Dinh develop client ideas during the design sprint, DesignUP.

Chapter 1

Learning through experience

One goal of design education is to be a gateway to professional practice. When working with clients, you learn through action by working on projects and advancing through that process, rather than solely applying theory in a classroom.

This chapter situates client work in the design classroom within a larger educational context, by addressing learning-through-doing, project outcomes, and a variety of management and learning styles. We connect these approaches to the well-established tradition of experiential education.

HOW?

WHO?

WHAT?

WHY?

Problem-solving by design

The word *design* can mean different things. It is used as a *verb* when we refer to the process of design. For example, “I am designing this website.” Design is a *noun* when we refer to the designed object, as in, “This is my logo design.” We also use design as an *adjective* when we describe a design-oriented approach to something, such as design thinking, design methodology, or design management. Taken even further, we also refer to the field of design—all of the different disciplines and crafts that use design as a problem-solving process.

No matter how we use the word design, all these meanings share the fact that design (as a field) is a service industry. Designers usually work in service for someone else, such as clients, community partners, customers, or end users. For example, a potential client or partner seeks the services of a designer to help them do something for their business or organization, such as designing a logo and a brand identity, developing an advertising campaign, or strategizing an outreach program. They turn to designers for expertise

Working on real-world projects taught me to ask better questions. In traditional design studio classes, you only rely on your own preferences and good design principles. With real-world projects, there is a whole other set of opinions you need to cater to. In order to meet the expectations of clients, I had to learn how to dig deep and get to the “why” behind every project.

—Micah Vetter, alumnus of Design Streak at Illinois State University

and problem-solving approaches that they—the client or partner—don’t have. Designers then seek to add value for the client by understanding their needs and interests so that they can transform those challenges into thoughtful, responsible, and successful design solutions. How we develop relationships and practices with these clients and partners is critical to success—for both them and us.

This book is about how students and faculty can develop these complex, successful client relationships within a design classroom or program context. These kinds of experiences move beyond abstract, theoretical design exercises to allow you to engage with an existing challenge in the world. There’s a lot to learn, and it’s not always easy. But it’s always rewarding. So let’s get started!



Class doesn’t officially start until 9am, but the studio is already bustling with activity by 8:30am. One student team is finalizing its presentation for a client meeting later that morning. Another team is preparing to head out and conduct field research, including ethnographic observations of a shopping center, and interviews with customers. The instructor is providing feedback to a third team on some concepts the students developed the night before. After a quick critique, the instructor will check in with the field team to see if they have any questions before leaving. The instructor will then respond to a couple of emails from potential clients, before finally sitting down with the client meeting team at 9am to practice their presentation.

Learning through doing

Many design education programs aim to provide you—design students—with a “passport to practice.” **Educators want you to be able to learn about design by actually doing design**, an approach called “learning by doing,” in which instructors assign real-world client projects. In individual courses and stand-alone student-run design studios, you actively work on design projects and advance those through iterative processes rather than solely by learning theory. The idea is that you learn through action when working on real-world projects.

To create these experiences, design educators establish connections between external organizations and industries and their universities. In many cases, these projects involve simulation of a workplace environment in which you take on professional roles (such as art director, project manager, and social media lead) and follow procedures identical to those used in design practice. This simulation—sometimes called a practicum—helps model the industry practices of collaboration, innovation, client service, and design methodology. The studio space allows you to create the “habits of mind” necessary to enter the profession.² Additionally, **the unexpected challenges of a studio lay the groundwork for an adaptable mindset.**

The practices within these projects and studios vary widely in teaching styles, curriculum requirements, faculty involvement, student autonomy, client selection, client interaction, institutional support, and facilities. By identifying the goals of design education, faculty and students can better structure these experiences to achieve those aims. For example, in these environments, you are typically not taught, you are coached. The coach’s role is to demonstrate, advise, question, and criticize. To make this practicum a meaningful learning experience, you and your instructor must engage in “reflection-in-action.”³ Through this interaction, you can begin teaching yourself and learning from your instructors.

Developing and managing client work in the classroom and in student-run campus design studios is hard work for both faculty and students. It takes more time, energy, and commitment than teaching and learning within a traditional studio class. Faculty are continually caught up in the daily management tasks of keeping their students, clients, and projects on track. Meanwhile, you learn as you go, balancing real-world expectations and pressures with your other coursework. **The challenges are many, but the rewards are even greater.**

ACTIVITY 1.1

Questions for internal reflection⁴

*Reflecting on your own design process can also be thought of as **metacognition**, or thinking about your own thinking. When you better understand your own thinking processes, you become more skilled at developing a range of creative strategies and ideas for the designs you are working on. Metacognition also helps you understand how your thinking processes might differ from those of a fellow student or collaborator. When everyone collaborating in a group starts to be aware of these differences, you can develop even more diverse and creative ideas.*

Here are a few questions that can prompt metacognitive reflection. Try keeping an ongoing journal and answer these questions for every project you work on, even solo projects.

- How did you approach your design task?
What strategies did you use to solve your design problem?
- Did you have a clear understanding of the problem?
If not, how did you gain more understanding along the way?
- What information and research influenced your design and why?
How did you go about finding it?
- Did you use any specific creative strategy that you think was successful?
- Did any of your collaborators use strategies that you think were successful?
- Did you execute your design task differently from what you are used to?
- How much time did you spend on the project?
Was that the amount of time you anticipated?
- What would you do differently next time?

Learning through experience

Another way of thinking about learning by doing in design education is through the lens of experiential education. The Association for Experiential Education defines experiential education as “a philosophy that informs many methodologies in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people’s capacity to contribute to their communities.”⁵ Experiential educational practices are proven to impact students positively.

Experiential learning links education, work, and personal development

by offering a framework to understand the critical connections between learning objectives and “real world” activities.⁶ Learning is a holistic adaptive process that can provide conceptual bridges across life situations. Perhaps most importantly, **research shows that you are more likely to get a job when you participate in practicum and internship-type experiences**, all of which fall under the umbrella of work-based learning (WBL). Experiential learning manifests itself in the design classroom in many ways, including:

- **Project-based learning** (inquiry-based, problem-based, practitioner-focused)
- **Community-based learning** (service projects, place-based curriculum, off-campus study)
- **Integrative learning** (work-integrations, co-curricular integrations)
- **Internships and externships**
- **Active learning** (cooperative and collaborative, game-based, case studies).

Client-based practicum experiences in design education could be a combination of all of the examples listed, but are primarily focused on project-based learning. Some specific types of project-based learning in design programs (with examples from this book) include:

- Collaborative assignments
- Community-based learning
- Capstone courses and projects
- Practicums
- Student-run design studios.

These high-impact practices include integrative and applied learning in which you synthesize information across disciplines. The nature of these activities dictates regular interaction with your instructor and peers, giving you feedback that is often almost continuous. As many of these design practicum courses are often capstone courses, they are culminating moments in which you can integrate and apply what you have learned throughout your studies.

It’s also important to recognize that not everyone has had the same academic preparation prior to college. People come from very different backgrounds and experiences. The best instructors teach with this in mind, meeting you where you are. When managed well, learning through experience leads to more equitable outcomes because it helps even the “playing field.” You are coached through these experiences in ways that you don’t always get coached in a traditional classroom. You can make direct connections between what you’re learning and how you’ll use that knowledge on the job. In addition, students from diverse backgrounds are coached

COMMUNICATING CARE DURING EXPERIENTIAL EDUCATION

Syllabus statements from faculty

Rebecca Tegtmeier

Associate Professor, Michigan State University

While I am not a trained mental health professional, I am someone you can reach out to if you’re struggling, whether or not your concerns pertain directly to this course. Our conversations will be confidential, though please remember that all faculty are mandatory reporters if issues of violence, sexual harm, or harassment are disclosed. I do ask that if you are having any personal difficulties (that are affecting your participation) please notify me sooner than later so we can discuss options for you to move forward. I’m a good listener, and I can help connect you to campus and other resources that are here to help you. As your course instructor, I am committed to helping you successfully complete this course, but it’s even more important to me that you experience our classroom as a space that is open, inclusive, and supportive. I am a mom and a commuter, I do my best to make it on-time for class, however, situations do arise. I will try to notify you all sooner than later if I will be late to class.

Meaghan Dee

Associate Professor, Virginia Tech

Students in this class are encouraged to speak up and participate during class meetings. The class will represent a diversity of individual beliefs, backgrounds, and experiences—and every member of this class must show respect for every other member of this class. Additionally, if you have a preferred name or pronoun, please let me and your classmates know. And please do not hesitate to correct me if I make a mistake. My preferred pronouns are *she* and *her*. All are welcome here.

Penina Laker (co-created with her class)
Associate Professor, Washington University

We are committed to the ongoing work of anti-racism and we ask you to do the same. To move forward, we must acknowledge the role that designers have contributed to the creation and perpetuation of unjust systems and institutions. We also realize that this work takes time and sustained involvement; let us all work together and approach new knowledge with a learning mindset.

through these work-based experiences, which offers them opportunities to “see” themselves in the profession.

In all these ways, experiential education is immersive, purposeful, social, and builds relationships between students and faculty members. Teachers become curators of experience, providing a large

amount of feedback. In return, you gain a sense of ownership over your work, and become a co-constructor of your learning.

MINI-ACTIVITY

Co-create a code-of-conduct or values statement with your classmates

A model for empowerment

Current research builds on previous experiential learning research on personal development, to focus on students' co-construction of learning, leading to empowerment. For example, Najla Mouchrek co-created, in collaboration with Mark Benson, the “Theory of Integrated Empowerment in the Transition to Adulthood.” In this model, four catalysts—agency, purpose, mentoring, and community—lead young adults to become self-directed and to find a meaningful role within society. Najla says, “**Empowerment emerges through real-world experimentation and active engagement in relevant activities, integrated through self-reflection and meaning-making.**” Najla discusses this model of empowerment at greater length in *Chapter 3: Becoming empowered*.

To be comfortable being creative, you must first feel safe, welcome, and worthy. As such, every classroom should be free from discrimination and prejudice. Design faculty members take on many different roles (such as coach, mentor, educator, and advisor), yet one of their most important “unofficial” responsibilities is to be an advocate. Faculty should affirm the inherent dignity of all of their students, recognizing that each individual has unique circumstances and challenges. Faculty can communicate this verbally and in syllabi and learning management systems (see the previous page for examples). Students can find a sense of agency and purpose by having industry success—such as bringing a client project to fruition—and being acknowledged for their small and large achievements.

ARCS OF TIME

Example from
Renée Walker's
Auto-ethnography
Typographic
Timeline project.



ACTIVITY 1.2

Auto-ethnography typographic timeline⁸

In this exercise, instructor Renée Walker asks students to view their personal experiences through a typographic lens. Students collect and reflect upon typographic imagery that is personally meaningful for them.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Collect and gather a minimum of eight images using a provided template. Provide caption information with the following:

- Date created
- Creator (if known)
- Artifact title
- Artifact type
- Location (where was it made or found)
- Description (1–3 sentences)
- Citation of source

During class, students then work together to organize their captioned images in a timeline form. The y-axis is organized by time, and the x-axis by category (i.e. formal properties, artifact type, etc.). Students use strings to make connections between each others' years and categories to create a non-linear timeline of their type samples.



Source: teachingresource.aiga.org/project/autoethnography-typographic-timeline

Engaging with ethics and equity

MINI-ACTIVITY

Take a moment and reflect on what “good design” means to you.

Are you purely thinking about aesthetics? Does what you’re exposed to influence your visual preference?

Does content impact whether a design is “good” or not?

Designers work with other people. In those interactions, you will inevitably encounter issues related to ethics, power (and who does or doesn’t have it), and equity. **Will your design solutions help or harm an individual or a community? How do you know?** To tackle these questions, designers need to know themselves, their clients, and the contexts and communities in which they’re working. We talk about this in detail in *Chapter 4*.

One reflective approach is auto-ethnography, a tool that Gaby Hernández, Associate Professor at the University of Arkansas, uses for self-discovery and sense-making for designers about their own identity. This process informs future interactions with others. Gaby asks students to explore their identity, background, and personal history. Then, they create design projects that manifest their findings. (You can read more about Gaby in *Chapter 4*.) Renée Walker, Associate Professor at Thomas Jefferson University, uses another approach to auto-ethnography that focuses on typography and personal history (see *Activity 1.2* on the previous spread).

Conclusion

Students who participate in experiential education become less prejudiced and more empathetic to bias and injustice.¹¹

In summary, one of the goals of design education is to guide you through learning by doing and learning through experience so that you become empowered to transition to professional design practice. This involves learning to deal

Building on this foundation of self-awareness and reflective practice, designers must consciously examine their ethics and actions. But what exactly do we mean by ethics? Designer and educator Juliette Cezzar says that being ethical often means “not participating in something you don’t believe in, or not doing something that you know will cause harm to others.”¹⁰ Other designers have thought about ethics so deeply that they’ve created their own approaches, such as Laura Javier’s “The Designer’s 10-point Hippocratic Oath.”¹⁰

Actively thinking about ethical issues when you don’t have an immediate problem (aka “a fire to put out”) will help you react appropriately when problems arise. For example, sometimes designers feel uncomfortable with having to stand up to a client when they make an inappropriate comment or ask for a piece that goes against the designer’s beliefs. Power dynamics are also complicated by the teacher–student relationship in the classroom. Experiential education is an excellent way to practice dealing with issues within the constraints and relative safety of the classroom environment.

with tricky ethical issues while working collaboratively with diverse people. In the following chapters, we will highlight examples of how students, faculty, and administrators can successfully engage in client-based and community partner projects in design classes.

Chapter 1 key concepts

auto-ethnography: autobiographical writing and reflection based on the lived experience of the author that connects one’s personal insights to broader cultural, political, and social systems

equity: when everyone has what they need to succeed. Some people might need different kinds of access and support than others in order to achieve the same goals

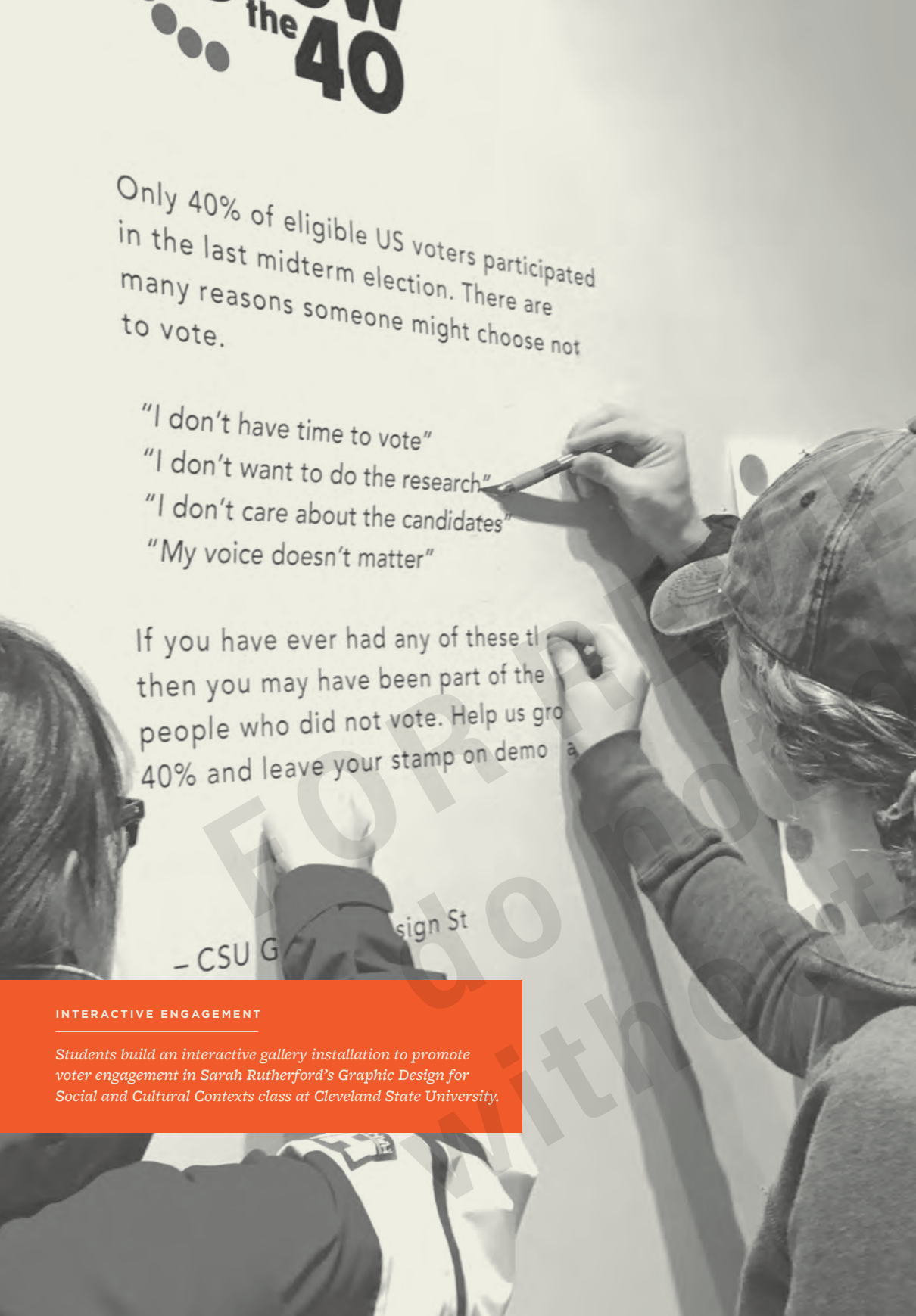
ethics: morals or principles that guide your behavior and actions

metacognition: thinking about your thinking

practicum: the practical (applied) part of a course of study; putting theory or ideas into action

References

1. Tovey, Mike. 2015. *Design Pedagogy: Developments in Art and Design Education*. New York: Routledge.
2. Shulman, Lee S. “Signature pedagogies in the professions.” *Daedalus* 134, no. 3 (2005): 52–59.
3. Schön, Donald A. 1987. *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
4. Questions adapted from Hargrove, Ryan. 2012. “Fostering Creativity in the Design Studio: A Framework towards Effective Pedagogical Practices.” *Art, Design & Communication in Higher Education* 10 (1): 7–31; and Kavousi, Shabnam, Patrick A. Miller, and Patricia A. Alexander. 2020. “Modeling Metacognition in Design Thinking and Design Making.” *International Journal of Technology and Design Education* 30 (4): 709–35.
5. Association for Experiential Education. n.d. “What is Experiential Education?” aee.org/what-is-experiential-education.
6. Roberts, Jay W. 2015. *Experiential Education in the College Context: What It Is, How It Works, and Why It Matters*. New York: Routledge.
7. Mouchrek, N., & Benson, M. (2023). *The Theory of Integrated Empowerment in the Transition to Adulthood: Concepts and Measures*. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 8, 62.
8. “Design Teaching Resource.” n.d. teachingresource.aiga.org.
9. Cezzar, Juliette. 2018. *The AIGA Guide to Careers in Graphic and Communication Design*. New York: Bloomsbury Academic.
10. Javier, Laura. n.d. “The Designer’s 10-Point Hippocratic Oath.” Laura Javier. designersoath.com/index.html.
11. Simons, Lori, Lawrence Fehr, Nancy Blank, Heather Connell, Denise Georganas, David Fernandez, and Verda Peterson. 2012. “Lessons Learned from Experiential Learning: What Do Students Learn from a Practicum/Internship?” *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* 24 (3): 325–34.



Chapter 2

Connecting to industry & community

We've established that one of the purposes of design education is to help prepare students to become professional designers. Whether that means you're going to work for a big, mainstream design firm or a small, nonprofit organization, design educators strive to keep their design programs connected to what's happening in the "real world." Educators are aware of what employers are looking for when hiring designers, and they structure client-based projects to help you prepare for those expectations.

In this chapter, we'll discuss the relationships that educators and students develop with industry and how they initiate those relationships. Then, you'll learn about the guidelines—based on current industry standards—that design organizations created to help educators structure their design programs. We'll highlight how those guidelines connect to design curricula and experiential education. You'll also learn directly from professionals working in the field who describe how client-based experiences help students develop empowerment on the path to gaining employment.

INTERACTIVE ENGAGEMENT

Students build an interactive gallery installation to promote voter engagement in Sarah Rutherford's Graphic Design for Social and Cultural Contexts class at Cleveland State University.