

Course Instructor: Andrew Riseman

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Mentors: This description is intended to help you better understand the curricular experience of your intern, to outline the roles and responsibilities of the students, mentors, and instructors, and to offer helpful suggestions designed to enhance the internship for both you and your intern. If at any time you have questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to either myself or Veronik Campbell, Community Engaged Education and Partnerships, Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, at veronik.campbell@ubc.ca.

Course Approach

The pursuit of a degree is a meaningful experience for many students, ripe with moments to learn about who they are, what matters to them, and how they want to contribute to the world. In the 2014 Gallup-Purdue Index study, over 30,000 graduates reported that their academic success contributed to the likelihood of their career success. The odds of being engaged at work after completing their degree were two times higher for students who completed an internship that applied their classroom learning in a work setting (Gallup, 2014). An internship is an excellent opportunity to augment what they have learned about the food system through their course work to date and expand on how those theories, approaches, and frameworks apply in a work setting.

However, learning through experience is not inevitable. In order to maximize this experience, this course has been created to support and scaffold their learning to strengthen their career development. It will apply the principles of Design Thinking (Burnett and Evans, 2016) to explore their values, interests, skills, strengths and future career aspirations. Consider this a prototyping-experience, where they can test, try, and evaluate one example of work within the food system. By introducing them to tools and strategies for designing and building their internship and life after, they will strengthen their agency towards the pursuit of meaningful work and a good life.

For students selecting an internship, many of them initiated their design process before class started. The act of selecting an internship is a milestone for many students in their academic and career development because it determines which skills, strengths, and areas of exploration they wish to pursue. Many students make choices based on intended future plans. Their individual learning goals for each internship vary, but the unifying theme is often one of skill-development and experimentation.

This internship course can also serve to:

- 1) Apply classroom knowledge in a practical setting by connecting theoretical knowledge of the food system to the lived experience of working in the food system.
- 2) Connect students to communities and networks of professionals who will influence their professional imagination.
- 3) Empower students through relationships to current professionals who have experienced systemic barriers like discrimination as a result of race, gender, class or other dimensions of intersectionality.
- 4) Strengthen existing skills and develop new skills for future opportunities.

What students can expect from class?

Applying the Life Design Methodology

The concept of applying human-centred design to career planning is best explained by the authors through their TEDX talk at Stanford University. This twenty-minute overview provides you with an overview of the

concepts students will be exploring in parallel to their internship. As mentors to students exploring their career, you are encouraged to review this video.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SemHh0n19LA>

The classroom assignments and activities are designed with this methodology in mind, so that students can maximize their personal and professional growth throughout their internship and beyond. Each assignment focuses on one stage in the design process and works students sequentially through each phase, building skills and incorporating personal reflection along the way. These tools are designed for students to learn and grow with a good degree of flexibility, so that some students can take a deep dive while others can answer in a straightforward manner. Therefore, these assignments can be completed with minimal time (i.e., no time away from workplace) or, if the intern desires, a deeper reflection.

The monthly face-to-face workshop assignments are meant to extend and enhance the learning that takes place each day as part of their internship.

Important Dates for Students

Date	Module	First Time Interns	Second Time Interns
Jan 4		Internship starts	Internship resumes
Jan 7 10:00 am – 12:00 pm Mcml 350	Introduction and overview	In class: introduction to Life Design and your internship experience	Optional: re-introduction to Life Design and your internship experience
Jan 14	Empathize	Prepare Your Work Plan	Update Your Work Plan
Jan 21	Empathize	Finalize Your Work Plan	Empathize Your Life Design
Jan 28			
Feb 4 10:00 am – 12:00 pm Mcml 350	Define	In class: defining challenges + reframing beliefs	
Feb 11	Define	Define Your Internship	Define Your Life Design
Feb 18	Reading Break		
Feb 25	Ideate	Ideate Your Internship	
March 4 10:00 am – 12:00 pm Mcml 350	Ideate	In class: ideating options + prototyping solutions	
March 11	Ideate		Ideate Your Life Design
March 18	Prototype	Prototype Your Internship	Prototype Your Life Design
March 25			

Final Exam period	Test	Final presentation: Test Your Internship	Final presentation: Test Your Life Design
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Mentor Commitment:

- Coordinate with the CSFS in developing the internship post;
- Review applications and interview top candidates;
- Finalize responsibilities and registration form with the selected student;
- Support students in developing employability skills and work ethic, including providing constructive feedback through the internship (an evaluation rubric will be sent to you twice per internship). The course instructor assigns the final grade with information provided by the mentors. In addition, it is your responsibility to inform the instructor of any concerns or issues as soon as they are identified.
- Collaborate with your intern as appropriate to set a Workplan, timeline for deliverables and other assignments designed to support the internship.
- Provide two assessments of the intern, one mid-semester (i.e., formative) and one at the end of the internship (i.e., summative with percent grade).

Student commitment:

- Accept where I am and to consider: Problem finding + problem solving = well-designed life.
- Assume a beginner's mindset.
- Put aside my own experiences in order to stay curious to other points of view.
- Question everything – even the things I think I already understand.
- Be truly curious in both familiar and unfamiliar contexts.
- Find patterns that occur across and within environments.
- Listen...really listen. [NB: What and how someone says something matters and needs to be understood before you can respond. (Burnett and Evans, 2016)]

Instructor Commitment:

- Being available as needed, flexible to your individual needs, and fair in your assessments.
- I also commit to creating a meaningful learning environment for you. One that includes connection to your peers in this class, as well as meaningfully created activities that connect and build on each other. All of this is designed to further your personal and professional growth.

NB: Developing the Work Plan: In addition to setting clear and explicit expectations for the intern within the workplace, the Work Plan and timeline for deliverables have also been incorporated into the first assignment. In support, the students have been given several templates to help guide a conversation with you to make clear each of your expectations for the internship. For this conversation, I expect the intern to be leading the conversation and hope you will be willing and supportive participants. I expect you and the intern will be able to find a mutually agreeable time, between 30-60 mins, somewhere within the first two weeks of the internship for this conversation.

Grade Policy

Both First Time and Returning Interns:

This is a graded course based on Assignments (20%) and Internship Assessments (80%). The assignments are ungraded but will have comments added and marked as Completed once submitted. Each assignment will be worth an equal proportion of the 20%. Intern assessments (formative at 6 weeks and summative at end of internship) completed by the internship mentors will comprise the remainder of the grade.

Assignments

Assignments are intended to expose the interns to different perspectives and expand their understanding of what meaningful work can be. The assignments are designed so that the interns can complete them with little time if they are only interested in a cursory exposure to the Designing Your Life framework. However, they are also sufficiently robust to allow them a deep dive into the topic if they choose and have the time to devote to it. No amount of time should be taken from the workplace to complete these assignments.

For First Time Interns:

To receive credit for this course, the interns will need to complete the following:

- 1) Agreed upon number of hours at the internship
- 2) Tasks, projects, and goals determined by you and your intern (i.e., Workplan)
- 3) Canvas assignments:
 - Time log
 - Assignments
 - Empathize - Prepare your Work Plan
 - Empathize - Finalize your Work Plan
 - Define Your Internship
 - Ideate Your Internship
 - Prototype Your Internship
 - Test Your Internship
- 4) Final Presentation: Test Your Internship

For Returning Interns

To receive credit for this course, the interns need to complete the following:

- 1) Agreed upon number of hours at the internship
- 2) Tasks, projects, and goals determined by you and your intern (i.e., Workplan)
- 3) Canvas assignments:
 - Updated work plan
 - Empathize Your Life Design
 - Define Your Life Design
 - Ideate Your Life Design
 - Prototype Your Life Design
 - Test Your Life Design
- 4) Final Presentation: Test Your Life Design

Monthly Meetings for Students

I have scheduled monthly face-to-face meetings the first Monday of each month. Attendance is not mandatory as this is currently an unmetabled course. However, if possible, attendance is strongly encouraged. Attending these sessions will significantly help students connect with the Designing Your Life framework.

Final Presentations

Mentors are invited to attend any or all of the final presentations. Presentations will be scheduled as a “final exam” for all students, and the date, time, and location will be confirmed during the semester with all other exams.

Additional Information to Consider

Strategies for Successful Supervision and Mentoring

As a work placement supervisor, your role is two-fold: to support the student's work placement and to keep your own organization running smoothly. Here are some strategies to consider:

1- PLAN AHEAD

The internship posting and registration form provide a basic internship profile. These tasks can shift (and this is usually OK), but as much as possible, know what tasks you will have the intern do before the intern arrives. Ask yourself: *What documents, training, or tools are needed to understand this role or task? Do I need to check in with anybody else before implementing this project phase?*

Addressing these questions in advance will help maximize your efficiency as a team.

2- SCHEDULE APPROPRIATELY

Spending a little extra time at the outset to clarify roles can increase the overall contribution of the intern. Stay open to questions by using strategies such as giving as much initial information as possible, fielding a few questions, and then discussing additional ones while doing the work. You can also use prompts such as: *We can keep discussing this as we start working. Let's park this question for now but remind me when we're harvesting.*

3- GENERATE GROUP DISCUSSION

Generate group discussion with questions like: *What do you know about this already? Who feels confident demonstrating?* This provides students with different perspectives to learn from. It also fosters a sense of inclusivity and creates a safe space to experiment. From a supervisor's perspective, it allows you to get a sense of the student's level of expertise.

4- CLEARLY DELINEATE PARAMETERS

Don't assume the intern knows how to keep kale bunch sizes consistent or how much time to spend on a literature review. Establishing time, quality, and scope parameters is a key aspect of work efficiency. Promote teamwork with prompts like: *Let's radio together to check in about the kale. Let's chat on the phone next week to review the number hours you've spent on the project.*

5- IDENTIFY LEADERSHIP ROLES

Ensure that it is clear who has leadership over which tasks. It is helpful for students to have a sense of ownership over certain aspects of a project, but it is as important for them to learn that certain tasks require more experience. If working on a long-term project, consider asking the intern to create a spreadsheet of actions, deadlines, and associated leaders.

6- MODEL GOOD WORK TECHNIQUE, BEHAVIOUR, AND VALUES

Respond to emails in a timely manner. Promote respectful communication. Be reliable with follow-through and responsibility. Showcase good work ethic through efficacy and efficiency. And most importantly, have fun, be flexible, laugh and work together when sharing difficult tasks.

7- SUPPORT HOLISTIC SYSTEMS THINKING

Include time in your mentoring to ensure interns get the context behind a problem and its broader implications. Support the intern in reaching out to other experts to develop a multidisciplinary

approach to problem solving. Emphasize the importance of building common ground across age, ability, political views, socioeconomic status, culture, belief, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender.

8- DISCUSS EXPECTATIONS REGULARLY

Check in about expectations throughout the internship with scheduled meetings to discuss things like: *Is there anything you feel you wanted to learn and haven't yet? Are you experiencing any equipment or people problems that represent obstacles to your learning? Let's go back to your initial work placement learning objectives, do you feel like you're on the right track?*

9- PROVIDE CONSTRUCTIVE FEEDBACK

Providing feedback is a key responsibility as a work placement mentor. It is your responsibility to make sure that you communicate in ways that allow the receiver to understand what it is that you are saying. Here are some constructive feedback best practices:

- Before addressing any issues, ask permission to speak directly about what you see, e.g., *[Name], can I give you some feedback?* By asking permission, you deflect the initial defensive reaction to criticism and open the door to better communication.
- When giving feedback to correct a behavior, be constructive by mentioning specific examples and using the first person: *I've noticed that in the past week, you've arrived at 10am instead of 9am as we agreed* (as opposed to: *You're always late*). Mention how that behavior affects you or your organization: *When you arrive late, it delays our team in accomplishing that task.*
- End with what you want in the future: *In the future, please arrive on time every day. If this is a problem, please let me know.* Be open to further discussion. Ask the intern to tell you, in their own words, what they heard from you. In doing so, you make sure that what you said was not misinterpreted. Do not leave people feeling defensive or guilty. Emphasise that mistakes are part of how we learn. Thank the person for allowing you to be honest.