

UThrive:
First-Generation College Students (FGCS) Leadership Program at
the University of Tampa

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EME 606: Design of Online Collaborative Learning

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Needs Analysis

Problem Identification **Kat/Abby**

The University of Tampa recently launched [Spartan Ready®](#) with the goal of helping students develop in-demand skills that foster academic success, career readiness, life preparedness, and social mobility – skills that ensure success beyond academic majors and career fields. The competencies listed among the Spartan Ready® Pillars include critical thinking, communication, leadership, professionalism, self-awareness, and more. Since the initiative was recently introduced, there has been limited experience in systematically integrating these competencies into a course or program designed to explicitly teach students these skills. Currently, no such course or program exists.

In conducting this needs analysis, we placed our focus on first-generation college students (FGCS), defined as students whose parents did not complete college with a 4-year degree (Stephens et al., 2012). FGCS come from diverse social, economic, and cultural backgrounds, but they share the common goal of developing themselves academically and professionally. An article from Massachusetts General Hospital states that FGCS have a particularly difficult time navigating college due to academic expectations, financial challenges, and finding community on campus (Massachusetts General Hospital Clay Center). In recognition of these obstacles and challenges, first-generation programming and curriculum is important.

A “survival guide” called [How to Be Broke at UTampa](#) was created for freshmen, offering additional resources and tips for helping them navigate life at The University of Tampa. This resource is underutilized because of its eBook format and it does not encompass the comprehensive needs of FGCS. We hope the leadership program will encourage student cohorts to identify special challenges facing first-generation college students and create more innovative solutions that are practical and engaging for the FGCS students to use, while also evolving every year to align with student interests.

Our program will target FGCS sophomores, students in their second-year of study. They are usually in the process of exploring their academic interests more deeply and may begin focusing on their chosen major or area of study. They have had a year to acclimate to The University of Tampa culture and academic environment. This makes them an ideal group to target for developing leadership, project management, and public speaking skills that they can apply to future internships and upper level coursework. The University of Tampa chartered a chapter of the [Tri-Alpha first-generation honor society](#) in Fall 2023 and is expecting its first inductees in Spring 2025. This provides an opportunity to create a program that will benefit this group of emerging leaders. We hope to see more students grow in confidence in their abilities to take on leadership roles.

Problem Statement Kat

There is a need for a leadership development program for the Tri Alpha sophomores at the University of Tampa, aimed at enhancing competencies in key areas such as leadership, communication, collaboration, and problem-solving. Currently, Tri Alpha sophomores may have basic understanding of leadership and communication but they may lack the depth of skills needed to address complex issues, such as the ability to work with groups, handle conflict resolution, and engage in creative and innovative thinking. The ideal level of competency includes advanced leadership skills, creative problem-solving, and effective communication. This program will bridge this gap by providing students with the tools to develop innovative, practical solutions for first-generation college students (FGCS), ultimately empowering these learners to lead with confidence and make a meaningful impact in their community.

Instructional Goal Kat

The instructional goal of this leadership course is for students to identify a problem or issue faced by first-generation college students (FGCS) at The University of Tampa, and create an innovative solution that is practical and engaging for FGCS to use.

Learner Analysis **Maddy**

The **sophomores** in **Tri Alpha** at the **University of Tampa** who are interested in joining the leadership board are required to take this program, making it a pivotal part of their development as both leaders and mentors. These students have already demonstrated perseverance as first-generation college students who have navigated their first year successfully, and now they are ready to step up as leaders and mentors to incoming freshmen. Their experiences as first-generation students provide them with valuable insights, but they may not yet have developed strong mentoring, teaching, or leadership capabilities, which this program aims to cultivate.



In terms of **digital literacy**, the sophomores in this program are generally comfortable with basic digital tools, especially those relevant to university life, such as Canvas LMS, email, and standard word processing or presentation software. However, their skills may vary when it comes to more advanced educational technology, such as creating and sharing multimedia content or using digital platforms for instructional purposes. While most are familiar with Canvas, the program will need to provide instruction on how to leverage this tool to engage with freshmen effectively, including creating guides, running discussion forums, and assessing progress.

The **demographic diversity** among the sophomores is significant.



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Athletes	Of which may have tight schedules due to practices and competitions.
International Students	Of which might face challenges related to language barriers, cultural adjustments, or homesickness.
Out-of-State Students	Individuals that may have less support from family and friends and are adjusting to a new environment.
Commuters	Those that balance their studies with long travel times and may not have as strong a connection to the campus community
Military-Affiliated	These individuals bring a wealth of life experience, discipline, and maturity to their roles as mentors.

This diversity in background means that the sophomores may have a wide range of experiences, competencies, and challenges that will shape how they interact with the freshmen and how they approach their mentorship roles.

Instructional **implications** of these differences require that the program be flexible, engaging, and tailored to the diverse needs and backgrounds of the learners. For instance, the program content should incorporate a variety of learning methods, including interactive modules, case studies, and role-playing activities that appeal to different learning styles. Visual learners can benefit from infographics and videos, while auditory learners may prefer discussion-based activities. The program must also account for the time constraints of athletes and commuters, offering flexible learning options and asynchronous content delivery. Additionally, the program should emphasize the importance of cultural sensitivity, especially when mentoring international students or those from diverse backgrounds.

Given the different **majors** and competencies of the sophomores, the program should focus on developing transferable skills that will help these students succeed as leaders and mentors, regardless of their academic discipline.

These students have a range of **motivations** for wanting to join the program. Some are likely driven by a deep personal desire to give back to the community and help freshmen succeed, while others may see this opportunity as a way to gain valuable leadership experience

for their future careers. Additionally, all participants will earn a certificate upon completing the program, regardless of their decision to join the board. Understanding these different motivations is important for the program, as it can help guide the design of the content to appeal to both personal fulfillment and career development. The program should highlight the growth and satisfaction that comes from helping others while also emphasizing how these leadership roles can enhance their resumes, build skills for the future, and offer networking opportunities.

Context Analysis Giulia

Participation in the UThrive leadership program will be available to a selected group of Tri Alpha sophomores. Selection for the program will be determined based on GPA, a motivation letter, and one academic recommendation letter. Each academic year, 25 students will be chosen to participate. The program will begin each Fall semester and last the entire academic year (Fall and Spring). The selection process will start the week after the induction to Tri Alpha, at the beginning of the Summer Term. The deadline to apply is week 6 of the Summer Term, with final decisions posted in week 12.

Successful completion of the program will award participants a leadership certificate and the opportunity to facilitate a showcase event for relevant faculty and administrative University stakeholders. Additionally, successful participation in this program will fulfill Tri Alpha's community service requirements for the academic year and grant access to candidacy for leadership positions within the UTampa Tri Alpha chapter.

The selectiveness of the program, along with the awards and recognition opportunities it offers, paired with the high-demand development of leadership skills, will motivate students to participate. As per our conversation with the SME, there is an explicit and evident connection between the skills and accolades associated with the program and the tendency of this generation of students to engage in extracurricular activities that explicitly fulfill valued professional development milestones or prerequisites.

The program will be delivered through the university's SpartanLearn (Canvas) Learning Management System (LMS) and supplemented with additional collaborative platforms and integrations. Students will primarily meet online, with the exception of the initial introductory meeting, in-person research as needed, and the final showcase event. To facilitate collaboration

and connection, participants are required to register on LinkedIn and use the LinkedIn platform. Additionally, participants must use Microsoft tools such as Teams and Outlook for correspondence and file management.

The program will be designed as an online collaborative learning environment, with the instructor's facilitation focused on mediation and guidance. It will be a project-based learning experience that requires active participation in group processes, discussions, and research. It should be noted that the program will be delivered concurrently with the typical full-time course load for undergraduate students. - 18 credit units.

Technology Requirements:

- Personal laptop (microphone and webcam integrated or supported)
- Stable Wifi Connection
- Basic knowledge of Canvas LMS
- Basic knowledge of free collaborative web-based tools like Google Docs
- Basic knowledge of UT's licensed softwares such as Microsoft Office
- Basic knowledge of online presentation tools such Canva
- Netiquette basic knowledge

Existing Materials Include:

- Design Thinking Process Guide
- Design Thinking Worksheet
- Empathy Interview Guide
- Group Norms Worksheet
- Spartan Ready Life Skills
- CliftonStrengths Assessment
- MBTI Personality Test

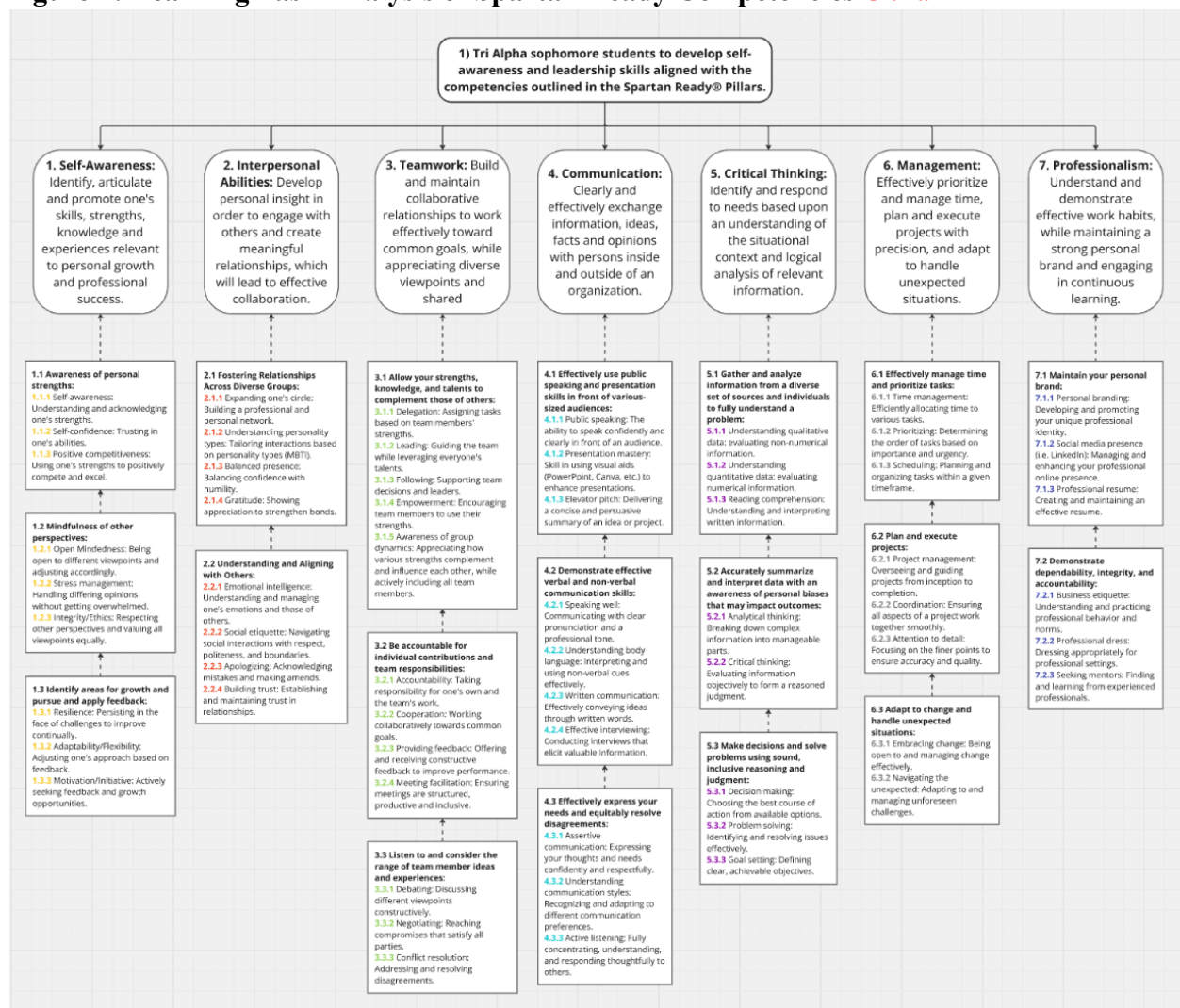
Once development is completed, ownership of the program and implementation responsibilities will transfer to the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the University of Tampa. The program will be facilitated by the First-Generation Programs Coordinator, with support from the Office of Student Leadership and Engagement. Facilitation guides will be

provided to the interested offices. UTampa instructional designers will be available on an as-needed basis to assist with technical issues and content adaptations.

The program is designed to be self-sustaining for a minimum of four years. After this period, a revision committee will be established to assess the need for changes. If revisions are deemed necessary, an integration plan will be developed.

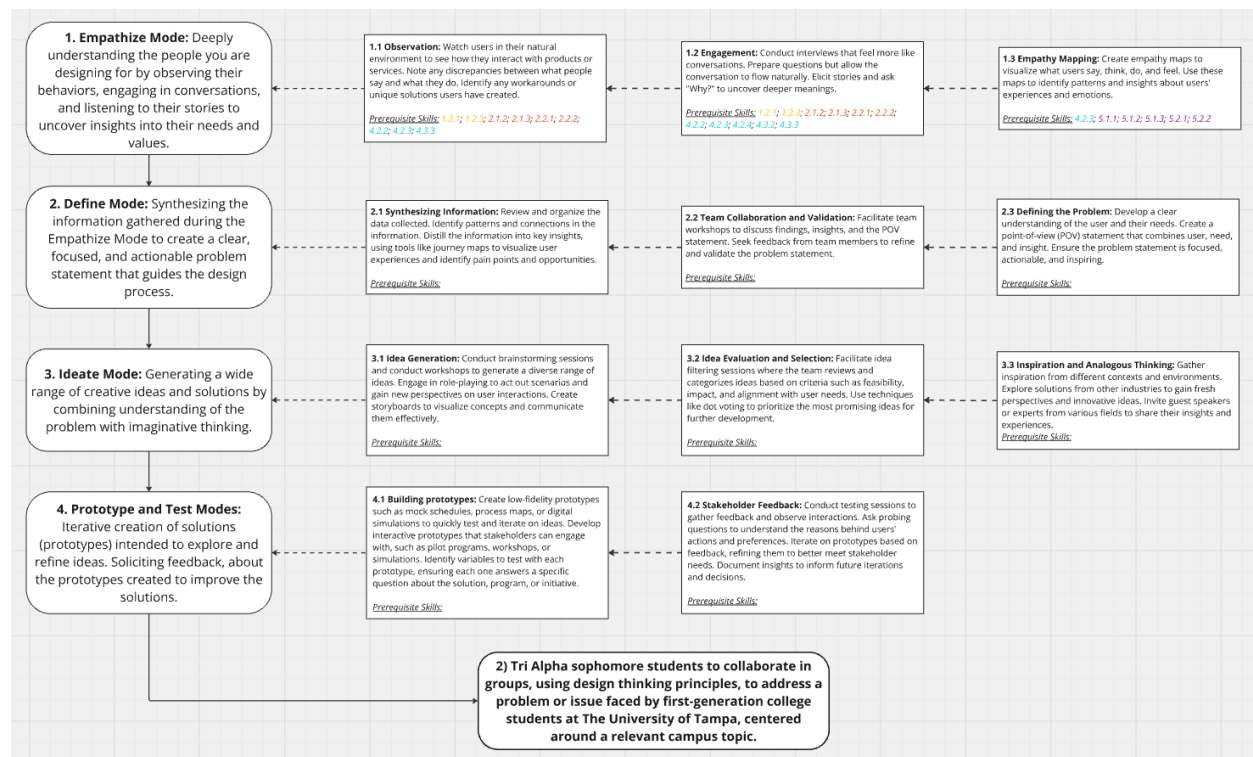
Task Analysis

Figure 1: Learning Task Analysis of Spartan Ready Competencies **Giulia**



Learning Task Analysis created on [Miro Board](#).

Figure 2: Learning Task Analysis based on Design Thinking Process Giulia



Learning Task Analysis created on [Miro Board](#).

Learning Objectives Kat

The scope of our project encompasses Phase 0: Orientation and Phase 1: Empathize Mode of the Design Thinking Process. By the end of Phase 1, students will be able to achieve the following learning objectives, which are organized by topic.

Topic	Learning Objectives: Learners will be able to...
Introduction to Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Identify</i> the main features and tools available on Canvas platform b. <i>Navigate</i> through the course layout and access key resources within the course c. <i>Identify</i> expectations for participation and communication within the course d. <i>Introduce</i> themselves to their peers during an icebreaker activity to foster connections with classmates and instructor.

What is Design Thinking?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Define</i> design thinking and explain its key stages, including empathize, define, ideate, prototype, and test b. <i>Explain</i> the benefits of using design thinking for leadership and collaboration (including fostering innovation, improving problem-solving, and enhancing team dynamics) c. <i>Identify</i> and <i>analyze</i> real-world examples of design thinking application in various sectors (e.g., corporate, government, education) understanding how each stage is used.
Building Self-Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Identify</i> their personal strengths and recognize how these strengths relate to their academic and career goals b. <i>Create</i> a LinkedIn profile that highlights their skills, strengths, and experiences in a professional manner c. <i>Discuss</i> how their strengths contribute to their leadership potential d. <i>Recognize</i> strengths that are similar or different from their peers.
Defining Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Define</i> leadership and compare various leadership styles based on real-world examples b. <i>Identify</i> key qualities of effective leaders and assess their own leadership potential through self-reflection c. <i>Describe</i> the role of a leader in a collaborative group setting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. <i>Analyze</i> how leadership impacts group dynamics and outcomes
Build Collaborative Teams: (Establish Group Norms for Effective Collaboration)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>List</i> their group members (5 people), choosing them based on complementary skills and/or interests b. <i>Develop</i> effective communication norms for group collaboration c. <i>Sign</i> a group contract that outlines expectations and responsibilities d. <i>Reflect</i> and <i>assess</i> the effectiveness of group norms and communication strategies throughout the project, making adjustments as needed to improve collaboration. e. <i>Use</i> Google Drive and Google Docs to <i>organize</i>, <i>share</i>, and <i>collaborate</i> on group resources, including the group norms document and other project-related materials
Empathy vs. Sympathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Define</i> empathy b. <i>Reflect</i> on empathy's role in fostering a human-centered approach to problem-solving design c. <i>Distinguish</i> between empathy and sympathy d. <i>Identify</i> different methods for building empathy such as active listening, observation, and open-ended questioning.
Conducting Effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Describe</i> the key principles and steps involved in conducting

Empathy Interviews	<p>an effective empathy interview, including preparing questions, building rapport, and active listening.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. <i>Construct</i> a list of open-ended, non-leading questions that encourage deep conversation and help uncover users' needs, pain points, and emotions. c. <i>Record</i> and <i>organize</i> observations from empathy interviews, identifying patterns and themes using an empathy map. d. <i>Reflect</i> on their interview experience, assessing their effectiveness in gathering useful insights and identifying areas of improvement.
Define Stage of Design Thinking: Define a Real-World Problem for Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Synthesize</i> insights from empathy interviews to identify key patterns and themes using an empathy map. b. <i>Collaborate</i> with their team to refine and agree upon a shared problem statement that guides the next steps in the design thinking process c. <i>Define</i> a clear and focused problem statement based on the information gathered during the empathy stage, ensuring the problem is human-centered and addresses real user needs.

Instructional Theories and Frameworks **Kat**

Our program draws from several instructional theories and frameworks that promote online collaborative environments: Community of Inquiry (CoI) framework by Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000), Communities of Innovation (CoI) framework (West, 2014), Participatory Culture Framework (Jenkins, 2006), and Knowledge Activity Framework (Paavola et al., 2004). The CoI framework serves as the guiding tool to ensure instructional design supports active learner engagement through social presence and critical and reflective learning through cognitive presence. Social Presence is about creating a learning environment where students connect with each other and their teachers. It includes things like group work, discussions, and giving feedback to help everyone learn together. Cognitive Presence ensures that students are actively engaged in problem-solving, reflection, and deep learning. Teaching presence refers to the intentional design of the course and the facilitator's role to guide the learning process, foster engagement, and offer support to ensure an engaging and productive learning experience.

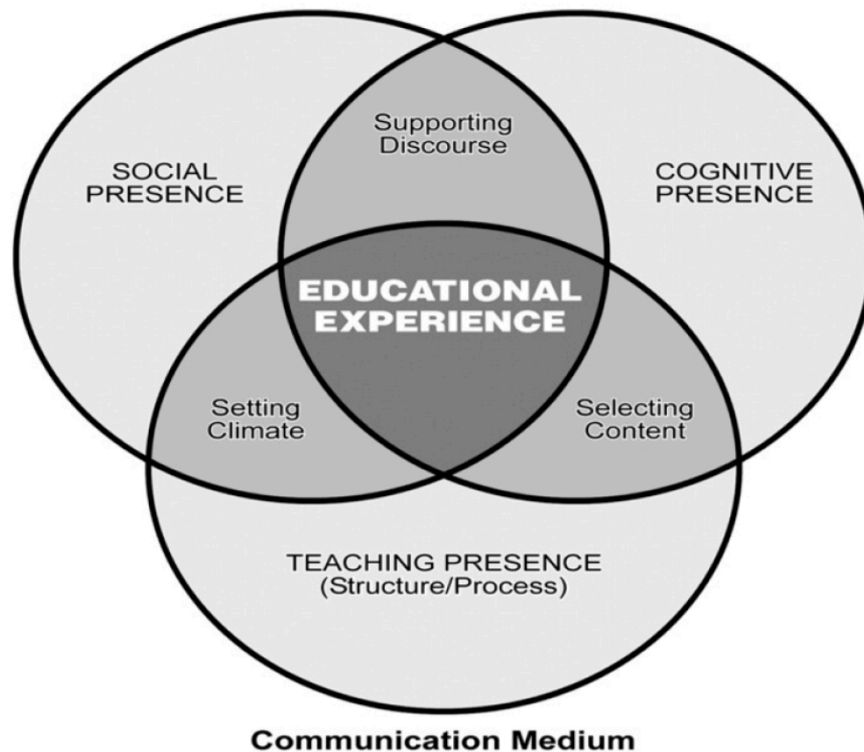


Figure 1 excerpted from Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2010). *The first decade of the Community of Inquiry framework: A retrospective. The Internet and Higher Education, 13*(1-2), 5-9.

According to West (2014), there is a critical need to teach and foster basic creative thinking among today's students, but of particular importance is the need to develop their abilities to engage in collaborative creativity. The Communities of Innovation (CoI) framework emphasizes group flow for effective group collaboration: a shared goal, close listening, blended egos, equal participation, communication, and effort to move ideas forward (West, 2014). The course utilizes the design thinking process to promote both group flow and creativity. Students will form self-organized teams and work together to develop solutions to real-world challenges faced by first-generation students. The leadership course focuses on two of the four main types of participatory activities learners engage in on social networking sites: affiliations and collaborative problem solving (Jenkins, 2006). Affiliations refer to joining online communities or networks, such as LinkedIn, to build social and professional connections. Collaborative problem solving involves working together in groups to address challenges, complete tasks, or create knowledge, such as using Google Docs for group research or collaborative projects. Our leadership course will incorporate elements of the Knowledge Activity Framework through Information Seeking, Knowledge Sharing, and Knowledge Construction. This is embedded in the design thinking process when students search for relevant information to build knowledge, contribute reflections and insights within collaborative learning spaces, and engage in group efforts to solve problems and complete tasks (Paavola et al., 2004).

Instructional Units (Strategies, Content, Assessments) **Giulia**

The following section provides an overview of the instructional strategies, assessments, and learning content to be developed for Phase 0 and Phase 1 of the UThrive Leadership program's pilot launch. Based on the elements of Design Thinking, the characteristics of project-based learning and the benefits of collaborative learning, the instructional units will consist of reflection exercises, opportunities for collaborative knowledge-building, and practical, hands-on activities. These components are designed to help learners master the design thinking process, develop leadership skills, and tackle a real-world problem effectively.

Module 1: Welcome to Course! (Introduction) **Abby**

- Learning Objective 1: Learners will be able to navigate the Canvas course
- Learning Objective 2: Learners will be able to identify course expectations and requirements.
- Learning Objective 3: Learners will be able to articulate personal goals for the course.
- Learning Objective 4: Instructor and learners will introduce themselves
- Learning Objective 5: Learners will be able to access and create assignment on Google Drive

Lesson number and Title	Module 0: Welcome to Course! (Introduction)
Content Overview	This introductory module orients learners to the course environment, expectations, and each other. Learners will explore the Canvas platform, establish goals, meet their instructor and peers, and complete a short activity using Google Drive. The goal is to build a strong foundation for communication, self-direction, and collaboration. Also include information for the following modules.
Lesson Duration	1 week
Required materials for learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Canvas LMS access- Google Drive account- Internet connection- Device with audio/video capability
Preparation information (if applicable)	Materials Needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Laptop or desktop- Reliable internet access

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Google (Gmail) account for Drive access
Learning content and associated activities, including collaborative elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome Video from Instructor: Overview of course purpose and community-building message. - Canvas Orientation Video/Tour: A screencast that helps students explore key areas (modules, grades, discussions). - Syllabus Scavenger Hunt: Interactive quiz or checklist on course expectations, grading, and communication norms. - Discussion Post: Learners will introduce themselves, share a fun fact, and articulate at least one personal goal for the course. - Google Drive Activity: Students will create a short document titled “My Goals for This Course” and upload it to a shared folder. - Student must “comment” on at least 2 student’s goals (1 shared google doc) - How to set up a google drive - Collaborative Element: Peer replies to at least two classmates in the discussion forum.
Text and multimedia assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome Video (Instructor-created) - Canvas Tour Video - Syllabus document (PDF or webpage) - Google Drive setup instructions (step-by-step guide or video)
Assessment strategies to evaluate understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Completion of Syllabus Scavenger Hunt - Discussion post and two peer responses - Submitted “My Goals for This Course” document in Google Drive
Reflection and wrap-up	<p>Students will reflect on their first week and share in a follow-up post or journal entry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are you most excited about in this course? - How comfortable do you feel navigating the course so far? - Is there anything you're still unsure about?

Module 2: What is Design Thinking? **Kat**

- Learning Objective 1: Learners will be able to *define* design thinking and explain its key stages, including empathize, define, ideate, prototype, and test

- Learning Objective 2: Learners will be able to *explain* the benefits of using design thinking for leadership and collaboration (including fostering innovation, improving problem-solving, and enhancing team dynamics)
- Learning Objective 3: *identify* and *analyze* real-world examples of design thinking application in various sectors (e.g., corporate, government, education) understanding how each stage is used.

Lesson number and title	Module 2: What is Design Thinking?
Content overview	This module introduces students to the Design Thinking Process, and its application in leadership and collaboration contexts. Through real-world examples, students will explore how design thinking fosters innovation, improves problem-solving, and strengthens team dynamics in various sectors, including business, government, and education.
Lesson duration	1 week
Required materials for learners	Google Drive Account Zoom Account Canvas LMS Access
Preparation information (if applicable)	Materials Needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Laptop or desktop - Internet access

<p>Learning content and associated activities, including collaborative elements</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Teacher will provide an infographic overview of what will be expected in the course (roadmap) of the design thinking process a. Students watch a video introducing Design Thinking Process: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_r0VX-aU_T8 b. Students watch a video illustrating each of the five stages in action: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPMPLs4EjDc&t=46s c. Case Studies: Students will find examples of companies and leaders who have successfully used design thinking to improve problem-solving skills, communication, and innovation. Analyze this real-world example (IDEO, Apple, or government initiative). Prompt: Choose a company, government agency, or educational institution that has applied the design thinking process or approach. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Case Study Analysis Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What problem or challenge was the organization trying to solve? - How did the organization gather insights about users or stakeholders involved? What methods did they use to empathize with their target audience (e.g., interviews, observations, surveys)? - How did they ensure diversity of ideas during the ideation process? - What types of prototypes did the organization create? - How did design thinking impact teamwork and collaboration within the organization? - What role did leadership play in guiding the design thinking process? - In your opinion, would the solution have been effective without using design thinking? Why or why not? - Collaborative Element: Padlet Activity
<p>Text and multimedia assets</p>	<p>Infographic Roadmap of Design Thinking Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_r0VX-aU_T8 Video:</p>

	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPMPLs4EjDc&t=46s
Assessment strategies to evaluate understanding	Activity #1: Case Studies Activity #2: Reflection Activity on Canvas Discussion
Reflection and wrap-up	<p>At the end of the module, students will engage in a reflective activity on Canvas discussion where they summarize the key insights from the module.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Imagine you're explaining design thinking to a friend who has never heard of it before. How would you describe the process and its stages? 2. Which stage of the design thinking process are you most excited about and why? Do you find any particular stage especially intriguing or potentially challenging? Why? 3. From your perspective, what are some of the benefits of using design thinking? How do you think it can make a difference in leadership or decision-making?

Module 3: Unleashing Leadership Potential **Maddy**

- Learning Objective 1: Learners will be able to identify their strengths and find commonalities with others' strengths
- Learning Objective 2: Learners will be able to create a LinkedIn profile
- Learning Objective 3: Learners will collaboratively reflect on how their strengths contribute to their leadership potential by discussing and comparing their strengths with peers

Lesson number and title	Module 3: Unleashing Leadership Potential
Content overview	In this module, students will focus on building self-awareness by identifying their individual strengths and learning how to leverage these strengths for personal and professional growth. They will collaborate with their peers to reflect on how their strengths align with effective leadership qualities. Additionally, students will work on

	<p>creating a professional LinkedIn profile, emphasizing their strengths and leadership potential to build a strong online presence. Through both individual and collaborative activities, students will gain a deeper understanding of how their unique abilities can contribute to their success as future leaders.</p>
Lesson duration	2 weeks
Required materials for learners	<p>Strengths Assessment Tool (e.g., CliftonStrengths) LinkedIn Account Google Drive Account Zoom Account Canvas LMS Access</p>
Preparation information (if applicable)	<p>Materials Needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Laptop or desktop - Internet access - Personal information related to strengths (job experiences, volunteer work, leadership roles) to help craft their LinkedIn profile
Learning content and associated activities, including collaborative elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complete the strengths assessment (found on CliftonStrengths). - Watch an introductory video on LinkedIn profile creation - Prepare any career materials you wish to include in your LinkedIn profile (resume, accomplishments, awards, etc.). <p>Activity #1: Strengths assessment and reflection</p> <p>Video on Strengths in Leadership Article on developing leadership CliftonStrengths</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learners will take a strengths assessment tool (on cliftonstrengths website) to identify their strengths 2. Reflect on how these strengths align with leadership roles and submit a brief personal reflection on

	<p>Canvas</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Once posts are on Canvas, classmates can analyze /comment on their posts. <p>Activity #2: Create a LinkedIn Profile</p> <p>Video on LinkedIn Intro</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students will create a LinkedIn profile, emphasizing their strengths and leadership qualities. Students will exchange their LinkedIn profiles on Canvas discussion and give constructive feedback on how to improve each other's profiles. Professional Headshots at the Career Center Drop-in (Mon-Fri 9am - 4pm) <p>Activity #3: Group Reflection</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students will be put in discussion groups The group will create a shared document or presentation using Canvas to reflect on how their combined strengths contribute to effective leadership Groups will submit the collective reflection on their leadership strengths Questions to consider for reflection: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What leadership strengths did each group member contribute to the project? How did your group effectively collaborate and communicate during the process? Were there any challenges in leadership roles, and how were they addressed? How did your leadership styles complement one another?
Text and multimedia assets	<p>Video on Strengths in Leadership</p> <p>Article on developing leadership</p> <p>Video on LinkedIn Intro</p> <p>CliftonStrengths Leadership/Strengths Test</p>
Assessment strategies to evaluate understanding	<p>Assignment #1:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Written reflection on Canvas <p>Criteria: Completeness of reflection, clear articulation of identified strengths, and connection to leadership potential.</p> <p>Assignment #2:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Submission of LinkedIn profile link

	<p>Criteria: Professionalism, completeness, and alignment with strengths and leadership qualities.</p> <p>2. Peer feedback submission on LinkedIn profiles</p> <p>Criteria: Constructive feedback provided, specificity in recommendations to improve leadership representation.</p> <p>Assignment #3:</p> <p>1. Collaborative discussion post submission via Canvas</p> <p>Criteria: Depth of analysis, clarity of reflection, and collaborative effort.</p>
Reflection and wrap-up	<p>At the end of the module, students will engage in a reflective activity on Canvas discussion where they summarize the key insights from the module.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What have they learned about their personal strengths? 2. How do these strengths contribute to leadership potential? 3. What actions will they take to leverage their strengths in their future leadership roles?

Module 4: Leading from Within **Maddy**

- Learning Objective 1: Learners will be able to define leadership and understand different leadership styles.
- Learning Objective 2: Learners will be able to identify qualities of a leader and assess their own leadership potential
- Learning Objective 3: Learners will be able to describe the role of a leader in a collaborative group setting

Lesson number and title	Module 4: Leading from Within
Content overview	In this module, learners will explore the concept of leadership and develop a deeper understanding of various leadership styles. They will examine key leadership qualities and assess their own leadership potential. Through collaborative activities, learners will engage in discussions

	about the role of a leader in group settings and explore how their unique strengths and qualities can contribute to effective leadership in teams. By the end of the module, learners will have a clearer understanding of what makes a strong leader and how to apply leadership principles to collaborative environments.
Lesson duration	2 weeks
Required materials for learners	Leadership Theories Video
Preparation information (if applicable)	Google Drive Account Canvas LMS Access
Learning content and associated activities, including collaborative elements	<p>Activity 1: Define a leader</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Learners will watch three YouTube videos of well-known leaders in action (their pick) Example: MLK Jr, Steve Jobs, <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Leaders must be related to area of study Potentially find an individual on LinkedIn tied to major (subs for YouTube videos) On Canvas, analyze each individual and write about what leadership qualities they demonstrate. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Questions to consider for reflection: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> What common leadership themes or values emerged from the videos? Did anyone inspire you or shift your thinking? How does writing about leadership help clarify your own strengths or goals? <p>Activity 2: Leadership Simulation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Learners will participate in a leadership simulation using a branching scenario on Google Forms. In a breakout room on Zoom, groups will complete simulation together. Google form simulation: https://forms.gle/Z38HNM82RVh4ormYA <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The scenario will present a realistic team

	<p>challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Learners will be given multiple-choice decision points where they must choose how to respond as the leader c. Each choice will lead to different outcomes, helping learners understand the impact of leadership decisions on group collaboration
Text and multimedia assets	<p>Youtube videos - optional (can choose own leader)</p> <p>Google form for Simulation</p>
Assessment strategies to evaluate understanding	<p>Assignment #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Canvas analysis <p>Criteria: Learners must clearly define leadership, analyze at least two leadership styles with examples, assess their own leadership qualities, and organize their analysis with proper citations and clear writing</p> <p>Assignment #2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reflection on Canvas graded <p>Criteria: Learners should provide insightful reflections on their leadership style, connect course concepts to personal experiences, and outline actionable steps for improving their leadership abilities.</p> <p>Assignment #3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Google form simulation graded for participation <p>Criteria: Learners will be evaluated on their active participation, collaboration, and contribution to the simulation, demonstrating effective communication and problem-solving skills.</p>
Reflection and wrap-up	<p>After completing the activities and assessments in this module, take a moment to reflect on your understanding of leadership and your personal leadership potential. Consider the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What leadership style do you most identify with, and why? 2. How can you apply the qualities of an effective leader to your own leadership journey? 3. In what ways did the collaborative group activities

	<p>enhance your understanding of leadership in group settings?</p> <p>Write a 200-300 word reflection summarizing your thoughts on Canvas DB, including any new insights you've gained and how you plan to develop your leadership abilities moving forward. Title this Module 3 Reflection</p>
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Module 5: Establishing Group Norms **Kat**

- Learning Objective 1: Learners will be able to *list* their group members (5 people), choosing them based on complementary skills and/or interests
- Learning Objective 2: Learners will be able to *develop* effective communication norms for group collaboration
- Learning Objective 3: Learners will be able to *sign* a group contract that outlines expectations and responsibilities
- Learning Objective 4: Learners will be able to *reflect* and *assess* the effectiveness of group norms and communication strategies throughout the project, making adjustments as needed to improve collaboration.
- Learning Objective 5: Learners will be able to *use* Google Drive and Google Docs to *organize*, *share*, and *collaborate* on group resources, including the group norms document and other project-related materials

Lesson number and title	Module 5: Group Norms for Effective Collaboration
Content overview	This module emphasizes building effective group collaboration through the creation of group norms. Students will form teams of 3-4 members, selecting teammates based on complementary skills and interests. Together, they will develop group norms and use Google Docs to organize and share project materials. The team will also sign a commitment (or contract) to ensure shared accountability to the established norms.
Lesson duration	1 week
Required materials for learners	Google Drive Account Zoom Account Canvas LMS Access

Preparation information (if applicable)	<p>Materials Needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Laptop or desktop - Internet access
Learning content and associated activities, including collaborative elements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form a Group (3-4 Group members) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Looking back at the diverse skills and interests of our classmates, reach out to other students in this course via Canvas inbox or email to see if they would like to form a group. Affirm their skills and qualities that make them a good group member. 2. What are Communication Norms? What makes for effective collaboration? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present article on group norms: https://learningcenters.rutgers.edu/resources/guide-working-groups - Find a video or article (LinkedIn, journal) that offers practical tips and advice for working effectively in teams or groups. Share the article on Padlet, and include your own reflections on what makes teamwork and collaboration successful. Consider what aspects are most important to you when working in a group, and discuss how disagreements should be managed to maintain a positive and productive team dynamic. 3. Create a Google Folder in the Google Drive that has the Group Norms Worksheet <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Show a video on how to create, share, and collaborate on Google Docs for real-time document editing b. Best practices for collaborative editing: comments, suggestions, and version history c. How to structure folders within Google Drive for easy access to project documents and resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group fills out Group Norms Worksheet a. Find a time to meet together as a group to go over group norms and expectations (in-person or via Zoom)

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. If via Zoom, provide the instructions on how to create a Zoom link ii. Provide the time and date that you all met together in the Google Doc <ol style="list-style-type: none"> b. Sample Group Norms Worksheet will be provided by the instructor to fill out; look at the Padlet for inspiration on what norms you want to include in your contract. It is okay to be transparent and honest at this phase with your group. c. The Google Document should have evidence that everyone signed their “signature”
Text and multimedia assets	<p>Group Norms Worksheet provided by Instructor</p> <p>Article: https://learningcenters.rutgers.edu/resources/guide-working-groups</p>
Assessment strategies to evaluate understanding	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students formed groups (3-4 people) 2. Students created a Google Folder in Google Drive with Group Norms Worksheet inside 3. Students signed the Group Norms “contract”
Reflection and wrap-up	<p>Submission: Individual Reflection Canvas</p> <p>Reflect on the process of creating your group’s norms contract, how did it go? Were there any challenges, and how did you overcome them? What is one personal commitment you will stick to when collaborating with your group ?</p>

Module 6: Empathize Phase - Part 1: Understanding Empathy? Abby

- Learning Objective 1: Learners will be able to distinguish the difference between empathy and sympathy.
- Learning Objective 2: Learners will be able to explain the role of empathy in effective communication and leadership.
- Learning Objective 3: Learners will be able to apply empathy-based strategies in real or hypothetical social and professional scenarios.

Lesson number and Title	Module 6: Empathize Phase - Part 1: Understanding Empathy
Content Overview	This module is designed to introduce learners

	<p>to the foundational concepts of empathy and sympathy, emphasizing the critical differences between them and their real-world implications. Empathy is a core component of emotional intelligence and plays a key role in communication, leadership, collaboration, and conflict resolution. Learners will engage with multimedia content, reflective writing, peer discussions, and real-life scenarios to build a deeper understanding of how empathetic behavior fosters connection, trust, and inclusive environments. Through case-based application and dialogue, learners will be encouraged to think critically and introspectively about their own interpersonal habits and leadership potential.</p>
Lesson Duration	2 weeks
Required Materials for Learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to Canvas LMS - A device with reliable internet access (laptop, desktop, tablet) - Headphones or speakers for video content - Google Drive account for creating and submitting reflection activities - Writing tools (digital or physical) for journaling and note-taking
Preparation Information (If Applicable)	<p>Instructors may wish to prepare students by posting a brief announcement at the beginning of the week introducing the theme of the module. If needed, students can be guided to set up a Google Drive folder for course reflections. If synchronous, instructors should prepare breakout groups or collaborative whiteboards (e.g., Padlet, Jamboard). Additionally, a PDF or infographic comparing empathy and sympathy should be uploaded in advance for learners to reference during the module.</p>
Learning Content and Associated Activities (Including Collaborative Elements)	<p>1. Instructional Video: Students watch <i>Brené Brown on Empathy</i>. This short but powerful animated video introduces the emotional and psychological differences between empathy and sympathy in an accessible, engaging way.</p>

	<p>2. Empathy vs. Sympathy Organizer: After watching the video, learners complete a Venn diagram or T-chart highlighting the key differences and any areas of overlap between empathy and sympathy. They should reference examples from the video and their own experiences. This activity promotes cognitive processing and helps reinforce understanding visually.</p> <p>3. Case-Based Reflection: Learners are presented with a short narrative or video scenario (e.g., a manager responding to an overwhelmed employee). They must answer guided questions about how they might apply empathy in that situation, what emotional cues are present, and how an empathetic response differs from a sympathetic one.</p> <p>4. Discussion Forum Activity: Learners introduce a real or hypothetical experience where they either received or demonstrated empathy. They respond to prompts such as: “How did empathy change the dynamic in the situation?” or “What would you do differently if sympathy was used instead?” Students must respond meaningfully to at least two peers’ posts.</p> <p>5. Optional Small Group Collaboration (if synchronous or hybrid): Learners are placed in breakout rooms or collaborative online spaces to brainstorm ways to cultivate empathy in leadership settings—such as team meetings, classroom discussions, or community decision-making.</p>
Text and Multimedia Assets	<p>- Primary Video: <i>Brené Brown on Empathy</i> (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Evwgu369Jw)</p> <p>- Infographic or Slide: “Empathy vs. Sympathy” (provided by instructor or created using Canva/Piktochart)</p> <p>- Case Scenario Prompt: Written or video-based scenario depicting a leadership or</p>

	<p>communication challenge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Google Doc Template: For the case-based reflection and/or journaling - Optional Tools: Padlet, Jamboard, or Google Slides for collaboration
Assessment Strategies to Evaluate Understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visual Organizer Submission: Learners submit their Venn diagram/T-chart comparing empathy and sympathy. This can be used as a formative check for conceptual understanding. - Discussion Post and Peer Replies: Evaluated using a rubric based on clarity, relevance, connection to course content, and engagement with peers. - Reflection Response: Learners submit their answers to case-based empathy questions in Canvas. This serves as both a writing sample and an opportunity for introspection. - Optional Self-Assessment: Learners complete a self-assessment checklist or journal prompt about their communication habits and empathy use in daily interaction
Reflection and Wrap-Up	<p>To conclude the module, students complete a brief reflection activity using one or more of the following prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “How would you explain the difference between empathy and sympathy to a younger student or a friend?” - “Which situations in your life—personal, academic, or professional—could benefit from more empathy?” - “What barriers exist when trying to show empathy, and how can they be overcome?” <p>Instructors may also provide a summary message recapping key insights, addressing common themes from the discussion forum, and offering strategies for applying empathy in the upcoming module.</p>

Module 7: Empathize Phase - Part 2: Collecting Meaningful Data **Giulia**

- Learning Objective 1: Learners will be able to *describe* the key principles and steps involved in conducting an effective empathy interview, including preparing questions, building rapport, and active listening.
- Learning Objective 2: Learners will be able to *construct* a list of open-ended, non-leading questions that encourage deep conversation and help uncover users' needs, pain points, and emotions.
- Learning Objective 3: Learners will be able to *record* and *organize* observations from empathy interviews, identifying patterns and themes using an empathy map.
- Learning Objective 4: Learners will be able to *reflect* on their interview experience, assessing their effectiveness in gathering useful insights and identifying areas of improvement.

Lesson number and title	Module 7: Empathize Phase - Part 2: Collecting Meaningful Data
Content overview	<p>In this module, learners will put to practice the Empathize Phase of design thinking. They will interview 2 fellow 1st generation students according to the principles of empathy interviews and they will organize their findings into empathy maps. Through collaborative activities, learners will engage in knowledge sharing, consensus building and modeling activities.</p> <p>By the end of the module, learners will have conducted 2 empathy interviews and compiled and organized the data into empathy maps.</p>
Lesson duration	3 weeks
Required materials for learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Canvas LMS - A device with reliable internet access - Google Drive account - Writing tools (digital or physical) for note-taking - Miro - Personal Smartphone device or audio recorder - Otter.ai for transcription - Zoom

Preparation information (if applicable)	Learners will watch a brief video about the Empathize phase of Design Thinking to refresh the information learned in Module 2.
Learning content and associated activities, including collaborative elements	<p><i>Week 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation Activity: Learners watch a video about the Empathize Phase of Design Thinking. - Activity # 1: Learners study the provided Empathy Interview Guide; watch Empathy Interview example; Practice empathy interview with a peer (outside of their group) using the provided Practice Worksheet. Learners share the key takeaways from the practice exercise on Canvas discussion board (DB). - Activity #2: Each group compiles a list of 5 open-ended questions and uploads it to a designated Miro board. All learners discuss and vote 7 open-ended questions to include in the final empathy interview questionnaire. <p><i>* By the end of Week 1, Learners must schedule 2 interviews with 1st Gen students. Learners must provide confirmation on Canvas DB.</i></p> <p><i>Week 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activity #3: Learners will conduct interview with #2 1st Gen students using their personal smartphone or an audio recorder. Learners will transcribe the interviews using smartphone features or Otter.ai. Learners will upload the consent form, audio file, and transcription on the designated Google Drive folder. <p><i>Week 3</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activity #4: Learners will watch a video about how to use Empathy Maps and use the provided Empathy Map Guide to record and organize observations from empathy interviews. Each learner will provide feedback to a peer (outside of their group) empathy Map and corresponding transcription using Google Drive collaborative features.
Text and multimedia assets	1. Design Thinking: Empathize - YouTube Empathy Interview Guide Design Thinking for Education, Ep. 2: Interviewing Design Thinking Interview Techniques & Strategies

	How to do Empathy Mapping (for Marketers) Empathy Interview - Practice Worksheet Empathy Map Guide Consent Form (audio recording)
Assessment strategies to evaluate understanding	<p>Assignment #1: - Empathy Interview Worksheet (Canvas) Criteria: Learners upload their worksheet on Canvas DB and share key takeaways from the practice exercise answering the questions: <i>What was the most difficult part of the interview process? What part of the interview process was most insightful?</i></p> <p>Assignment #2: - Creating Interview Questionnaire (Miro) Criteria: Groups submit 5 open-ended questions on the Miro board. Learners collaboratively reach consensus on 7 open-ended questions to use in the empathy interview. All learners must submit their vote.</p> <p>Assignment #3: - Interview Process (Google Drive) Criteria: Learners conduct #2 empathy interview using the agreed upon questionnaire. Learners transcribe (verbatim) and upload related files to the designated Google Drive folder including Consent Form, Audio File, Transcription.</p> <p>Assignment #4: - Empathy Mapping (Google Drive/Canvas) Criteria: Learners record and organize observations from the interview using the provided Empathy Maps and upload their files on the designated Google Drive folder. Each learner provides feedback to a peer's (outside their group) Empathy Map and corresponding transcription. Learner will upload the link to the peer reviewed empathy map on Canvas.</p>
Reflection and wrap-up	<p><i>Week 3</i></p> <p>After completing the activities and assessments in this module, learners will have the opportunity to reflect and prepare for the Define Phase of the design thinking process.</p> <p>- Reflect (Canvas): Learners submit a reflection on</p>

	<p>the interview process, and empathy mapping answering the following questions: How did it go? Were there any challenges, and how did you overcome them? What is one thing that surprised or inspired you during the Empathy Phase of design thinking?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare (Miro): Each Group compiles the findings from their Empathy Maps into a designated Miro Board.
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Module 8: Define Phase: Fine-Tuning an Actionable Problem Statement Giulia

- Learning Objective 1: Learners will be able to *synthesize* insights from empathy interviews to identify key patterns and themes using an empathy map.
- Learning Objective 2: Learners will be able to *collaborate* with their team to refine and agree upon a shared problem statement that guides the next steps in the design thinking process.
- Learning Objective 3: Learners will be able to *define* a clear and focused problem statement based on the information gathered during the empathy stage, ensuring the problem is human-centered and addresses real user needs.

Lesson number and title	Module 8: Define Phase: Fine-Tuning an Actionable Problem Statement
Content overview	In this module, learners will put to practice the Define Phase of design thinking. They will synthesize emerging patterns, they will develop “How Might We...” questions and define their actionable problem statement. Through collaborative activities, learners will engage in knowledge sharing, consensus building and peer review. By the end of the module, learners will have submitted an agreed upon human centered actionable problem statement.
Lesson duration	2 weeks
Required materials for learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Canvas LMS - A device with reliable internet access - Google Drive account - Writing tools (digital or physical) for note-taking - Miro

	- Zoom
Preparation information (if applicable)	Learners will watch a brief video about the Define phase of Design Thinking to refresh the information learned in Module 2.
Learning content and associated activities, including collaborative elements	<p><i>Week 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation Activity: Learners watch a video about the Define Phase of Design Thinking. - Activity #1: Each group identifies #3 key patterns and organizes them using the provided POV Preliminary Guide (Who, What, Where, Why). Findings are summarized and shared on Canvas DB for peer review. <p><i>* Groups will pass on their work to another group for this Activity. Each group choose #1 key pattern. Communication between groups is necessary to ensure no-overlap is present.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activity #2: Learners watch a video about “How Might We...?” questions. Each group prepares a list of #3-5 “How Might We...?” questions related to the chosen pattern using the HMW Worksheet. <p><i>Week 2</i></p> <p><i>* Groups will pass on their work to another group for this Activity.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Activity #3: Learners watch a video about the Abstraction Ladder refining method. Each group refines the assigned list of “How Might We...?” questions using the Abstraction Ladder Worksheet. Process is summarized and shared on Canvas DB for peer review. - Activity #4: Each group prepares a final actionable problem statement (APS) using the Point of View Worksheet and considering the peer feedback received. Each group prepares a Problem Statement Pitch following the guidelines of the related worksheet and posts their APS on the designated Miro Board. On a Zoom conference each group will have 1 minute to pitch their APS to their peers. Voting will take place on Miro.

Text and multimedia assets	<p>2. Design Thinking: Define Design Thinking for Education, Ep. 22: "How might we...?" Design Thinking for Education, Ep. 21: The Abstraction Ladder Point Of View POV Preliminary Guide (Who, What, Where, Why) HMW Worksheet Abstraction Ladder worksheet Problem Statement Pitch Worksheet</p>
Assessment strategies to evaluate understanding	<p>Assignment #1: - Preliminary POV (Canvas/Google Drive) Criteria: Each group synthesizes #3 emerging patterns using the provided guides. The completed worksheets are to be uploaded to the designated Google Drive folder. Summary of the findings is shared on Canvas DB. All learners individually reviewed another group's findings.</p> <p>Assignment #2: - "How Might We..." (Google Drive) Criteria: Each group prepares a list of #3-5 "How Might We..." questions. Questions are related to the chosen pattern. The completed HMW Worksheet is uploaded to the designated Google Drive folder.</p> <p>Assignment #3: - Abstraction Ladder (Canvas/Google Drive) Criteria: Refined list of "How Might We..." questions are uploaded to the designated Google Drive folder and follows the worksheet guidelines. Summary of the refinement process is shared on Canvas DB. All learners individually reviewed another group's findings.</p> <p>Assignment #4: - Actionable Problem Statement (Google Drive/Miro) Criteria: Final actionable problem statements (APS) are uploaded on the designated Google Drive folder. The APS follows the Point of View Worksheet and considers the peer feedback received. Problem Statement Pitch follows the guidelines of the related worksheet, it is posted on Miro and is around 1 minute long. All learners must partake in the voting process.</p>

<p>Reflection and wrap-up</p>	<p><i>Week 2</i></p> <p>After completing the activities and assessments in this module, learners will have the opportunity to reflect and prepare for the Ideate Phase of the design thinking process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reflect (Canvas): Learners submit a reflection on the interview process, and empathy mapping answering the following questions: How did it go? Were there any challenges, and how did you overcome them? What is one thing that surprised or inspired you during the Define Phase of design thinking? - Prepare (Miro): Learners conduct individual research about existing initiatives and solutions for 1st Gen Students. Learners share their findings on Miro boards providing a summary of the initiative.
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