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INTRO SLIDE

Alright, well....welcome everyone to my proposal presentation. It is great to have you all join in and I am looking forward to sharing my research ideas and getting your feedback.

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AGENDA SLIDE

So here's the agenda for the next couple minutes. I will begin with some background on graphic design, studios and studio learning. This will lead into a highlight of some of the shifts in studio thinking/delivery that have created space for my own research to occur. Finally I will move into an overview of the proposed research study including the purpose, population, methodology, analysis scheme, etc.

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WHAT IS GRAPHIC DESIGN?

For the purposes of this proposal, graphic design is defined as, "...an activity that organizes visual communication in society. It is concerned with the efficiency of communication, the technology used for implementation, and the social impact it effects—in other words, its social responsibility" (Frascara, 2008, p. 28).

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At its most fundamental, graphic design is a communication bridge—conveying a message in varying degrees of complexity from one party to another. The message provokes a response that is audience-dependent, shifting behavior through its implementation. As Bennett (2006) notes, "...graphic design cannot be understood in isolation but only within a communication context" (p.28).

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Graphic design has been called a synthetic field that always looks out and is, not so much tied to a strict disciplinary practice, but instead integrated and woven into other fields—connected to other disciplines (Swanson, 1994).

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CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDIO AS PEDAGOGY

Graphic Design is thought to be an embodied cognition where the designer must show up each day ready to draw on tacit knowledge to work with materials. Because tacit knowledge is inherently embedded within the person herself and is not prescriptive, it is thought it must be passed on by example, imitation, and personal contact...learners must be welcomed into the process by a current practitioner.

Which brings us into a look at design education....

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In design education, the studio is considered to be both a place and a pedagogy. This duality makes for a somewhat complicated relationship as both elements are very much intertwined.

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Studio as a pedagogy resembles an apprentice paradigm where a learner generally learns under the supervision of a more knowledgeable educator.

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Studio pedagogy can be distilled (very broadly) into the following aspects: it is constructivist allowing learners to create meaning through project-based explorations, it is assessed primarily by

critique, and training emphasis in these project based explorations are more often on learning to assess the situation and engage in design process rather than find a single correct answer.

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STUDIO AS PHYSICAL PLACE
The physical place of the studio is also thought to be complicit in pedagogy. Hunt (2015) and Nottingham both posit that one of the hallmarks of traditional studio pedagogy is its ability to use the physical studio space to nurture the non-verbal elements of design learning.

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As work in various states of completion is pinned up, tables, walls, and even hallways, are thought to be vital non-human pedagogical agents in the studio (Nottingham, 2014).

Because place and pedagogy are so wound together in the studio, educators tend to be very protective of it and the ways the routines of specific meeting times and dedicated unique learning places foster the formation of communities of practice (Logan, 2007; Lave & Wegner, 1991).

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ONLINE STUDIO SPACES
Though in the past graphic design education was primarily conducted in physical face-to-face studios, graphic design educators today are beginning to leverage the internet to extend studio learning spaces (Fleischmann, 2014; Peterson et al, 2015; Nottingham, 2014).

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Educators who extend their studios cite that because most contemporary graphic design inherently requires working under technology mediated methods for collaboration, using the internet to extend studio pedagogy could provide students with a "rehearsal of future workplaces and help prepare students for a global, networked, and competitive professional design practice" (Pektas, 2015, p. 261).

In addition, educators who extend studios in these ways cite that online studio spaces allow design collaboration to transcend time and distance and thus prepare learners to become active members of the digitally-connected arts community (Budge, 2013; Matthews & Weigand, 2001).

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Davis points out that because graphic design has shifted from being a simple system to a diverse ecosystem...the whole scope of design education should be altered and augmented to better fit the new reality.

In the past when graphic design was much more print focused and designers were in control of the majority of the design process, a curriculum that revolved around a single educator and minimized complexity made sense.

But now, the traditional design education and the traditional studio model is no longer enough.

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According to Davis, design education is failing in its ability to provide students with experience navigating complex systems. Design education has become solutionist and reductionist, viewing

the world as a complicated set of items to be sorted and classified as opposed to a complex set of variables with multiple points of engagement that no one person can fully control.

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Pektas believes that one way to update the studio model is to augment traditional face to face studio structures with greater online elements. His vision of teaching for the design of distributed intelligence includes decentralizing the studio, making room for more many-to-many interactions and incorporating more participatory and interdisciplinary collaboration.

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PROBLEM STATEMENT

And so there exists a dichotomy about the spaces and places of the studio. Which brings me into the focus of this study.

It has been claimed that because graphic design learning requires a high level of tacit knowledge, best transmitted via the close confines of the studio setting, any separation of educator and learner in a geographic manner would pose a grave threat to studio pedagogy (Kvan, 2001; Souleles, 2011).

That said, it has also been noted that "overall, studio-based teaching in a traditional design studio as a physical space is becoming more difficult to sustain" (p. 40) and that "design educators need to rethink pedagogy for the online environment and use the technology to develop effective on-campus and online learning environments" (Fleischmann, 2015, p. 124).

Though many educators are beginning to call for greater

investigation into incorporating the internet into studio pedagogy, there is a gap in understanding as to how educators are actually using the internet to extend + augment studio pedagogy for undergrad learners.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

Which brings me into my proposed study....

This purpose of this study is to reveal a theory about online studio pedagogy in graphic design education to aid future design educators in decision-making about potential course delivery options.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The central research question for the study is: how are graphic design educators who work in brick and mortar institutions using the internet to augment, expand, and extend studio pedagogy for learners?

The following sub questions will guide the study:

1. What pedagogical impact do educators perceive come from extending studio pedagogy via the internet?
2. What influence does professional graphic design work experience have on the ways educators use the internet to extend studio pedagogy?
3. How does augmenting the studio via the internet alter the educator experience of studio pedagogy?
4. How are institutions supporting efforts to use the internet to augment, expand, and extend studio pedagogy?

PARTICIPANTS

To investigate these questions my participants will all be educators who have experience extending the studio via the internet.

You can see my inclusion and exclusion criteria here....

I will rely on a combination of personal and professional contacts to develop an initial sample of educators. After interacting with the initial round of participants, I will recruit the remaining participants via theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 2008) to best extend chosen categories that I see emerging from the codes and data

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Participants will be drawn from a worldwide audience of design educators, providing an international perspective and enabling adequate variance and diversity. Participants will also be recruited from a variety of institution types, from art schools to large universities to community and vocational training colleges. This too will ensure a diversity of perspectives is represented.

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As I am investigating the experience of educators who are extending and augmenting their studio spaces using the internet rather than those who use the internet to fully enact studio pedagogy, I will recruit educators who are working in blended learning spaces, meaning their courses have both a face-to-face and online studio component.

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QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Because I am seeking to create a better understanding of online studio pedagogy based on expressed participant experiences, an exclusively qualitative-based research approach is most appropriate.

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Qualitative research places high value on the researcher constructing meaning along with research participants through an iterative process of data collection. The researcher is seeking to explore a phenomenon rather than draw distinct correlations. This is much like the design studio itself where participants are encouraged to use their own backgrounds to inform their creative output and share their own unique perspectives through the critique process (Anthony, 1991).

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METHODOLOGY

For this study, I will be using grounded theory as my main research methodology.

Grounded theory is a method for data collection that uses inductive reasoning. It was first outlined by Glaser and Strauss in 1967.

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Grounded theory is an interpretive process that allows a theory of behavior or practice to emerge out of the specific context from which it had been developed and it is literally "grounded" in and grown out of the data and context itself (Willig, 2001).

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In grounded theory, theory is defined as a "set of well-developed

categories that are systematically interrelated through statements of relationship to form a theoretical framework that explains some phenomenon" (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, p. 55).

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With its ability to synthesize actions and interpretations, grounded theory is an appropriate method used in situations that have not been researched and where no theoretical framework currently exists (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). As Nottingham (2014) notes, graphic design online studio pedagogy is one such situation as it lacks an empirically based research framework defaulting instead to anecdotal best practices. Richburg (2013) concurs, calling for a new studio pedagogy that does not aspire to simply replicate traditional studio learning elements, rather utilizes the unique opportunities of the internet as a "broader gateway to knowledge in the professional world from people in other locations and from other disciplines within the university" (p.12).

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This knowledge gap makes grounded theory an ideal method to first examine how educators are augmenting, expanding, and extending studio pedagogy using the internet and next build a substantive theory to aid future educators.

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It is collectively thought that there are three main versions of grounded theory being practiced: classical grounded theory, straussian grounded theory, and finally constructivist grounded theory (Birks & Mills, 2015). The three variations differ in their views on when literature should be consulted, the data coding process, and the role of the researcher.

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I'll be using the third, most recent iteration, constructivist grounded theory in my study. Unlike some of the more traditional versions of grounded theory where a researcher tries to remove themselves as much as possible from the experience and their viewpoint from the data, Constructivist grounded theory places a high value on the researcher's own experience of the phenomenon and sees the researcher as being key in the co-construction of the data.

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METHODS

For gathering data, I will be using unstructured interviews, focus groups and memos.

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The interviews will help me both understand how educators construct their motivations and how they perceive institutional and learner reaction to their choices. Interviews will be conducted via videoconference software and be recorded. Each participant will be interviewed one time with the option of also being part of a focus group.

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The focus groups will be composed of five to ten participants at a time. Participation will be voluntary and include the same participants who are interviewed. Focus groups again will occur via videoconference software and be recorded.

The purpose of these focus groups will to further understand how

educators construct their motivations and to access "taken-for-granted assumptions" (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010, p. 167) about studio pedagogy that might be difficult to discern through one-to-one interviews.

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Throughout the research process I will also engage in another hallmark of grounded theory, memo writing. Memo writing involves writing short, analytic, informal notes during the data collection and analysis process. Seen as a "dialogue with yourself" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 94) memo writing opens the door for new ideas and insights. In addition, memo writing creates a traceable map of research process which further grounds theory creation. Memos can "form the core of grounded theory" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 94) as they provide the researcher fertile ground in which to iterate ideas.

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DATA ANALYSIS

Here's a basic graph of the data gathering and coding process I will use. You can see that in grounded theory, one gathers and analyzes data concurrently. The analysis process consists of coding data, synthesizing data, constantly checking and re-checking emergent categories of data before generating a theory which itself is grounded in the data. I will be using NVivo qualitative data analysis software to code.

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I'll be using Charmaz's data coding process which consists of two main phases: initial coding where each word, line or segment receives a name followed by focused coding where the most significant/ frequent codes become synthesized and integrated

together. As Charmaz advises, throughout this whole process I will be engaged in constant comparison to ensure that a consistent storyline is emerging from the data.

As I will be coding and analyzing data concurrently, the insights revealed during coding will direct my next round of data collection as I will seek to see if codes revealed represent commonalities in the data or newly emergent areas to investigate.

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TRUSTWORTHINESS

Essential to any study is its validity so one can be certain that the information gathered progresses beyond a nice story about the phenomenon. As you can see here, I'll be using these four trustworthy factors for qualitative research first outlined by Denzin and Lincoln which are credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to ensure trustworthiness + overall rigor.

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LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE

The main limitation in this study involves navigating participant relationships and data construction. Because participants are completely submerged in the research situation, they may have difficulty reflecting on their actions and motives.

Though studio pedagogy is the signature pedagogy of art and design education because my research will focus exclusively on graphic design studio pedagogy, what I discover may or may not be relevant to other disciplines.

Finally, I have chosen to only investigate the educator

experience thus will not address any part of the student experience of studio pedagogy.

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OUTCOMES

At the completion of this study, my anticipated outcomes are: to provide insight into the intricacies encountered when extending studio spaces, to inform and inspire educators about ways they can augment their own teaching methods, and finally to reveal a theory about online studio pedagogy in graphic design education to aid future design educators in decision making about potential course delivery options.

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THANKS

And with that...thank you!