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## Cultural Relevance & Awareness

DESLD 5530 Cultural Relevance & Awareness. 2 credits . Fall 1  
2016.

*Tuesdays, 6–10pm; Lazarus Center, Room 503; 131 W. North Ave  
Baltimore*

*Mitchell Sipus mitchell@symkala.com; Office Hours by Appointment;  
eClassroom: moodle.mica.edu*

**Course Theme: The Entrepreneurship Ecosystem of Migrant  
Communities within Baltimore, Maryland**

**Course Description:** Conventions to create and identify the role of design and its assets vary greatly across and within populations. In Cultural Relevance and Awareness, assumptions about good design are contextualized from distinct cultural perspectives and the nature of “good design” is challenged. Students investigate principles of Grounded Theory, Socio-cultural histories of technology (HASTS/STS) and design research methods that focus on communities of various cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. Course content veers away from homogenizing concepts such as holism and multiculturalism, but advance toward a post-structuralist design research, entrepreneurship, and design practice.

**Class Meetings** Expect class time to engage a variety of activities for learning, exploring and presenting your work. Please always have working files with you and available for potential in-class work sessions. We will cover a range of topics over the next eight weeks, including but not limited to: cultural variance, cultural geography, critical theory, actor network theory, ethnography, human-centered design, design thinking, design principles.

**Submitting work** Assignments are due as determined by the Assignment sheet provided for each pending assignment. NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS ARE ACCEPTED. If extenuating circumstances

undermine the ability to submit an assignment, please notify your instructor prior to deadline and provide any relevant documentation.

Final written reports and any accompanying presentation slides must be uploaded directly to the Moodle eClassroom. Assignments should be exported as PDFs and named in the following convention: LastName-ReportName-Date.pdf, e.g. “Brainerd-FinalReport-093016.pdf.”

Students are expected to be familiar and comfortable with uploading and submitting files through the Moodle eClassroom and are encouraged to test this functionality before the first assignment is due. It is the responsibility of each student to test this functionality and communicate any perceived technical problems proactively before assignments are due.

All Assignment Documentation is Emailed to Students and the Document is Archived and Maintained at [this Link](#).

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

- Students will gain a deeper understanding of culture and its role in design and innovation
- Students will be able to better identify and locate how their own perceptions and values fit within complex socio-cultural landscapes so as to navigate adversity and complexity
- Students will learn to measure abstract socio-cultural phenomena with contextually appropriate metrics
- Students will demonstrate the capacity to reflect upon and assess their own growth and learning
- Students will be able to articulate how culture functions, reproduces, transmits, and/or obstructs individual and collective behavior
- Students will collaborate and use multi-disciplinary problem solving strategies toward building new kinds of design practices and business processes
- Students will internalize their new, broader understanding of culture within their creative practices to generate transformative

outcomes that are spatio-temporally appropriate

### **Course Materials and resources**

- Your LAPTOP (please bring to every class)
- Smartphone or Tablet (preferably ios/android with GPS, if not available, please notify instructor and similar device will be provided).
- Journal/Sketchbook—for journal exercises and field research
- Additional materials and/or software will be introduced in class. None will have a cost.

### **Grading**, 100 point scale

- Baltimore Baseline Research— 10
- Baltimore Research Design—10
- Baltimore Fulcrum Data Collection 1 & 2—20
- Gaziantep Data Analysis for Comparison—10
- Proposal for intervention/opportunity—10
- Presentation /Video of Data Narratives—20
- Self-Review parts 1/2/3—10

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

**Week 1, August 23, T 6–10pm Overview of the course.**

**Introductions. Outline assignments & Opportunity Project.**

Lecture 1. Culture within Orders of Design

Activity—Mapping the entire history of ideas

Lecture 2—The Dominance of Structuralism

Readings: none

**Week 2, August 30, T 6–10pm Framing Culture & Dialectical Materialism**

**Assignment:** None

**Readings DUE:**

1. Human Rights and Cultural Relativism 89–106
2. Destruction of Memory—Chapter 2, Cultural Cleansing

Sipus, Mitchell. 2001. “Support for al-Shabaab by Diaspora,” *Forced Migration Review* 39

**Week 3, September 6, T 6–10pm Grounded Theory to Grounded Action; Cross-Cultural Design Research Methods Deep Dive**

*Class Content—Intro Opportunity Project Plan & Intro to Methods*

- Intro on Opportunity Project Part 1 and 2
- Ethnography, OSint and GeoInt

*In-class Exercise—Past-Tense, Goal Determination, Limiting Beliefs, Timeline,*

*Studio—Build Teams. Identify Sectors. Determine Methods. Prepare brief on methodology. Build collective resource archive for class and project planning.*

*Assignment Given:*

1. Reflection and one line plan on how class content can inform personal goals
2. OSint and Mental Map with Google Maps for Baseline Iteration.
3. Start to build Archive and design data management method with teammate

**Readings DUE:**

Yiftachel, Oren. 2009. “Critical Theory and ‘gray space’: Mobilization of the colonized. *City Vol 13 No 2–3, June-September* 240–256

Soini, Katriina. 2001. “Exploring human dimensions of multifunctional landscapes through mapping and map-making.” *Landscape and Urban Planning* 57, 225–239

*Chapter 1 of Charmaz, Kathy. 2007. Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guid through Qualitative Analysis. SAGE Publications LTD: London*

Sipus, Mitchell. 2013. “Qualitative and Ethnographic Research with Fulcum” at Fulcrum Blog,

<http://www.fulcrumapp.com/blog/qualitative-and-ethnographic-research-with-fulcrum/> Accessed September 6 2016

**Week 4, September 13, T 6–10pm Agenda: Opportunity Project Kickoff**

**Class Content:** Guest Lecture, Research Design, Methods Refinement

**Studio** Groups set Framing, sector priorities, methods, and questions  
(Due to Professor at of End Class)

Consolidate Research for Baltimore and Syria

**Assignment Due**—*Rapid Research Process (Cog Mapping, Interviews)*

**Assignment Provided**—*Finalize Research Design*

**Readings**

*Chapter 1 & 3 of Smith, Emma Grace. 2016. “The Role of Syrian Refugees in the Sharing Economy and Technology Sector in Germany: A Neoliberal Approach to Integration and Empowerment,” Thesis, Duke University, International Comparative Studies.*

Strangler, Dane and Jordan Bell-Masterson. 2015 *Measuring Entrepreneurial Ecosystem*. Kaufman Foundation Research Series on City, Metro, and Regional Entrepreneurship.

Aspen Institute. 2013. Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Diagnostic Toolkit  
[https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/files/content/docs/pubs/FINAL%20Ecosystem%20Toolkit%20Draft\\_print%20version.pdf](https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/files/content/docs/pubs/FINAL%20Ecosystem%20Toolkit%20Draft_print%20version.pdf)

Suggested

Buck, Stephani. 2015. “Catalyzing Ecosystems for Entrepreneurship” in *MicroLinks: Market Systems*.

<https://www.microlinks.org/blog/catalyzing-ecosystems-entrepreneurship>

**Week 5, September 20, T 6–10pm Opportunity Project**

**Assignment Due Beginning of Class**—Phase 1 of Baltimore Data, Initial Baltimore and Syria Resource Archive

**Class Content**—Methods and Tools for Indicator Determination, Informatics, and Analysis

**Assignment Given:** Phase 1 Indicator Research w/ Fulcrum

**Assignment Due End of Class**—Rapid Trial/Test with Fulcrum

**Reading:**

Bahcekapili, Cengiz and Buket Cetin. 2015. “The Impacts of Forced

Migraiton on Regional Economies: The Case of Syrian Refugees in Turkey,” *International Business Research*.

Maitland, Carleen and Ying Xu. 2016. “A Social Informatics Analysis of Refugee Mobile Phone Use: A Case Study of Za’atari Syrian Refugee Camp,” in CHI Proceedings

Zeisal, John.1981. *Inquiry by Design. Chapters 3, 5, & 6*

**Week 6, September 27, T 6–10pm**

**Consolidate Data: SWOT & Gap Analysis**

**Assignment Due:** Baltimore Fulcrum Data

**Class Content**—Prototyping and Design through Data;  
Possible Guest Speaker, TBD

**Studio**—Teams consolidate Fulcrum and Previous Data. Assemble clear presentation of data. Experiment with correlations and other analytics. Discuss and identify indicators for additional data collection ( collect as needed). Initiate Design of Final Presentation and Provide Intervention Pitch.

**Assignment Due:** Reflection on class activities in relation to readings.

**Assignment Given:** Phase 2Indicator Research w/ Fulcrum

**Reading:** Wall, Melissa; Campbell, Madeline; Janbek, Dana. 2015. “Syrian refugees and information precarity” *New Media & Society*, 1–15

**Week 7, October 4, 16 6–10pm From Data to Informatics**

**Class Content**—Cultures, Information, & Post-Structuralism

**Reading Due:** Artemis—just read as much as possible

**Written Assignment Due: Self Review (1 Page minimum)**

**In-Class Studio** —Data Synthesis & Presentation

- Construct and deliver a narrative not a report
- Use data to advance the story
- Introduce intervention at an intelligent point in narrative to sell the entire process, product, and outcome

Suggested Watching: Dan Hill on Dark Matter

## Dan Hill - Dark Matter & Trojan Horses



**Week 8**, October 11, T 6–10pm **Final Presentations. Presentation of Team DataViz & Suggested steps forward for Intervention Opportunity Project Presentations and Analysis Discoveries.**  
Course critique and discussion.

**Written Assignment to do In-Class: Self Review Update (1 paragraph minimum)**  
Course evaluations.

Suggested Assets

<http://www.interculturalcounseling.org/community-resources>

**ATTENDANCE POLICY** Students are expected to attend all meetings of each class in which they are enrolled, including Cultural Relevance & Awareness. Unexcused absences from three class meetings will result immediately with a failing grade.

### **Academic Policy Statements:**

**Americans with Disabilities Act** Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Learning Resource Center at 410–225–2416, in Bunting 458, to establish eligibility and coordinate reasonable accommodations.

**Environmental Health and Safety (EHS)** It is the responsibility of faculty and students to follow health and safety guidelines relevant to their individual activities, processes, and to review MICA's Emergency Action Plan and attend EHS training. It is each faculty member's

responsibility to coordinate with the EHS Office to ensure that all risks associated with their class activities are identified and to assure that their respective classroom procedures mirror the EHS and Academic Department Guidelines. Each of these policies and procedures must be followed by all students and faculty. Most importantly, faculty are to act in accordance with all safety compliance, state and federal, as employees of this college and are expected to act as examples of how to create art in a way to minimize risk, and reduce harm to themselves and the environment. Faculty must identify and require appropriate personal protective equipment for each art making process, for each student, in all of their classes, when applicable. Students are required to purchase personal protection equipment appropriate for their major. Those students who do not have the proper personal protection equipment will not be permitted to attend class until safe measures and personal protection are in place.

**Plagiarism** Each discipline within the arts has specific and appropriate means for students to cite or acknowledge sources and the ideas and material of others used in their own work. Students have the responsibility to become familiar with such processes and to carefully follow their use in developing original work.

**Policy** MICA will not tolerate plagiarism, which is defined as claiming authorship of, or using someone else's ideas or work without proper acknowledgement. Without proper attribution, a student may NOT replicate another's work, paraphrase another's ideas, or appropriate images in a manner that violates the specific rules against plagiarism in the student's department. In addition, students may not submit the same work for credit in more than one course without the explicit approval of all of the instructors of the courses involved.

**Consequences** When an instructor has evidence that a student has plagiarized work submitted for course credit, the instructor will confront the student and impose penalties that may include failing the course. In the case of a serious violation or repeated infractions from the same student, the instructor will report the infractions to the department chair or program director. Depending on the circumstances of the case, the department chair or program director may then report the student to the appropriate dean or provost, who may choose to impose further penalties, including expulsion.



**Appeal Process** Students who are penalized by an instructor or department for committing plagiarism have the right to appeal the charge and penalties that ensue. Within three weeks of institutional action, the student must submit a letter of appeal to the department chairperson or program director, or relevant dean or provost related to the course for which actions were taken. The academic officer will assign three members of the relevant department/division to serve on a review panel. The panel will meet with the student and the instructor of record and will review all relevant and available materials. The panel will determine whether or not to confirm the charge and penalties. The findings of the panel are final. The panel will notify the instructor, the chairperson, division, the student, and the Office of Academic Affairs of their findings and any recommendations for change in penalties.

**Title IX Notification** Maryland Institute College of Art seeks to provide an educational environment based on mutual respect that is free from discrimination and harassment. If you have encountered sexual harassment/misconduct/assault, please know that there are multiple ways to report it and you are encouraged to do so ([www.mica.edu/equal\\_opportunity](http://www.mica.edu/equal_opportunity)). Additionally, in order to meet our commitments to equity and to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, faculty and staff members are required to report disclosures of sexual violence made to them by students, except when prior notice regarding a specific classroom assignment or discussion is provided. If you require academic accommodations due to an incident involving sexual harassment or discrimination, please contact Student Affairs at 410.225.2422 or Human Resources at 410.225.2363.

**Students with Extended Illness or Cause for Legitimate Absence**  
In the case of extended illness or other legitimate absences that may keep the student from attending a class for more than three meetings, students must contact the Student Development Specialist in the Division that of Student Affairs so instructors can be notified. Graduate students must contact the instructor, program director, and the Office of Graduate Studies. Students in art education or professional studies programs must contact the Dean for the Center for Art Education or the Dean of the School for Professional and Continuing Studies, respectively. The appropriate administrator will

facilitate a conversation with faculty to determine whether the student can achieve satisfactory academic progress.

**MICA's Full Academic policies and procedures are published online at:** [www.mica.edu/Programs\\_of\\_Study/Academic\\_Bulletin.html](http://www.mica.edu/Programs_of_Study/Academic_Bulletin.html)