INVENT DESIGN CHANGE PROJECT: INTERACTION

A 10-week after school program that teaches high schoolers to use design to change their communities.

They will learn valuable skills in storytelling, communication, collaboration, creative thinking and problem solving while being exposed to interaction design as a potential career opportunity. Using New York City as a catalyst for creative thought and exploration, we will challenge students to approach problems using a variety of design methods. Students will be encouraged to tackle issues that matter to them with the prospect of creating viable solutions.

Curriculum Overview

BEFORE CLASS
Survey

Before coming to class, students will fill out a survey about their existing knowledge about design so we can better gauge their understanding of the material.

WEEK 1
Look at Times Square

What is design? What is interaction?
Times Square, one of the most recognizable places in the world, is an environment that has benefited from the skills and expertise of designers from several disciplines. This location will be the stimulus for an introduction to interaction and design.

WEEK 2
High Line

Coming up with Ideas
The High Line has been repurposed as an elevated park from its original function as a railroad, but its current state was not the first idea put on the table. We'll take a look at some of the hundreds of designs that were proposed for the High Line renovations before it arrived at its final form.

WEEK 3
Union Square, a Place for Everyone

Studying People & Environment
Everyday an eclectic mix of students, artists, skateboarders, musicians, and green market enthusiasts crowd Union Square. As designers, we must consider the space in context of the needs of this diverse population. Through discovery, we'll reveal some of the specific features of Union Square that make it accessible to so many people with different cultures, backgrounds, and personalities.

WEEK 4
Into the Wild

Field Trip
A classroom lesson only goes so far when learning about the professional practice of interaction design. We'll visit a working design studio to see many of the concepts we've discussed in class put to action.

WEEK 5
Did you check in here?

Mobile Technology
The majority of mobile interactions are centered around location. Looking at the popular app Foursquare, we will discuss the components of this experience as they relate to the city setting.

WEEK 6
How to Find Information in NYC

Goods vs Services
What is a service and how is it different from a physical product we might purchase at the store? We'll examine how the 311 system acts as a service to the residents of New York City.

WEEK 7
Green Buildings

Thinking about the Future
With concerns for the environment becoming a bigger topic in the design community, designers are addressing sustainability in every part of a product or service design. New York City is full of examples where designers have used technology to improve the environment in which we live.

WEEKS 8 AND 9
Project & 10 Minute Speaker

Work on Final Projects.

WEEK 10
Reflection

In an informal setting, students will be encouraged to ask questions and critique and applaud each others' successes. We'll discuss other ways students might pursue their interest in design, including formal outlets such as college and university programs or professional organizations. We will talk about other informal resources like blogs and books.

Final Project

In a team of 3–4 people, students will design a product or service for solving a problem they have observed or experienced in New York City. Students may choose from our list of suggestions, or think of their own ideas.

- Crowded public transportation
- Long lines…everywhere!
- Finding green places
- Commuting to school or work
- Signage, or lack thereof
- Utilizing the city's waterways
- Graffiti prevention, control and maintenance
- Classroom of the Future
- Lack of Public Spaces
- Access to fresh fruits and vegetables

FINAL PROJECT OUTPUT
Create a poster and narrative in a format that best tells the story of your problem and solution. Consider the use of writing, comics, photos, video and more in your plan. While finding a solution to the problem is ideal, the most important thing is to fully investigate the problem and be able to clearly communicate your findings to the group.