Final Project: Project Suggestions and Places to Visit

We hope you’ve been thinking about issues you care about for the final project and are pursuing them! However, we know it’s often difficult to pick a problem space, and even harder to find a place to go to interview people. If you have an issue that you care about a lot, we encourage you to pursue that, otherwise, you should do one of the following!

1. Redesign the retirement home experience
   1. Visit nearby nursing homes
   2. Talk to grandparents and/or grandparents of friends
2. Redesign the high school classroom/learning experience (or something else in education)
   1. Talk to educators - interview your teachers or even teachers you don’t have
   2. Talk to students - maybe students younger than you (e.g. middle school) or your peers
   3. For this, make sure you learn something about the person that you did not already know beforehand
3. Design for government
   1. Visit your town hall/municipal office (should ideally email beforehand)
   2. Talk to constituents - this can include anyone of voting age. Ideally, these are people who you don’t already know well, but even your parents are fine! Just try to learn something you didn’t know.

(Note: you should ideally email the organizations to ask if you can visit them before stopping by, but if you don’t have time to do that in advance, make sure to be as respectful as possible when making the request when you visit).

As mentioned in the previous document, either directly interview people, observe them, or do significant online research. Remember that you can interview your peers/parents/teachers, etc., so interviews might actually be a less time intensive and more rewarding option than online research.

Direct Interviews/Observation:

* Visit a site, plan to interview someone there in advance
* Visit a site, interview random passersby
* Direct service (volunteer-work)
* Speak directly with acquaintances: find out what matters to them, and why

We urge you to explore, stretch your comfort zone, and, with friends, it can be a fun glimpse you wouldn’t have gotten otherwise. If you are unable to directly engage with the community, we offer online alternatives (though highly suggest effective need-finding as being one of the most important parts of the project).

Online alternatives:

* Research organizations **thoroughly**
* Explore people’s stories
* Observe Facebook groups, community pages, forums, other social media
* Interactions with photographs, news articles, resources, YouTube videos

**Your assignment:**

Total time: <1 hour

* **Make observations:** Before interviewing, make a mental map of the people in whatever setting you’re observing. For about 10 minutes, write about your observations about specific people and the ways in which they engage with the place around them.
* **Interview:** Follow the interview process for at least 1 individual (ideally 3 for more options) to give you more choices about what kinds of projects you might be able to build. Each interview is recommended to be around ~10 minutes or more.
* **Analyze your findings:** Take about 10 minutes to analyze your observations and interviews, tying together concepts to make inferences about your person and some of their motivations, problems, and emotions.