Human Relationship Design

Collaborative approaches to inclusive design & creative intervention

Thesis I & II

2021-2022

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- Professional coach, PCC
- Trainer and facilitator
- Workshop designer

- Undergraduate student, OCAD University
  - Digital Futures Program (BDES)
  - Student representative Senate
  - Student representative Board of Governors
- Ontario Student Trustee Caucus

Plotting a map...

This presentation is an overview of my work in progress related to inclusive design and creative interventions explored in the 2021 fall semester at OCAD University.

It is intended to contextualize and connect the various points of exploration within identified sites of power at the institution, as well as guide the next phase of work during the winter 2022 semester.

Background

Human Relationship Design

Design interventions are often required to support organizational change. I coach teams through an inclusive design process to create a culture of shared values and responsibility, and further empower what it has come together to accomplish.

As a human relationship systems coach and a student in the Digital Futures Program, I am driven to merge my collaborative design methodologies with my art and design practices.

Thesis I:
Testing the Waters and Deep Dive

Phase 1:
Sourcing and tapping specific sites for design intervention

Overview

Sites of power and decision making at OCAD University are identified, as well as opportunities to engage governance from my position as a mature undergraduate student in the faculty of arts and sciences.

Initial steps of research and planning:

- Reading materials related to the university's system of governance and issues related to governance available to the public on it's website, such as strategic plan, financial reports
- Attending an information session about the student representative seats open in the Senate and the Board of Governors with the executive secretaries from the president and vice-provost's office
- Downloading and reading the required paperwork to run for each role, including obligations and expectations, time fulfillments, and other materials about organizational structure
- Acquiring the nominations, recommendations and signatures required to run for the roles open on Senate and Board of Governors
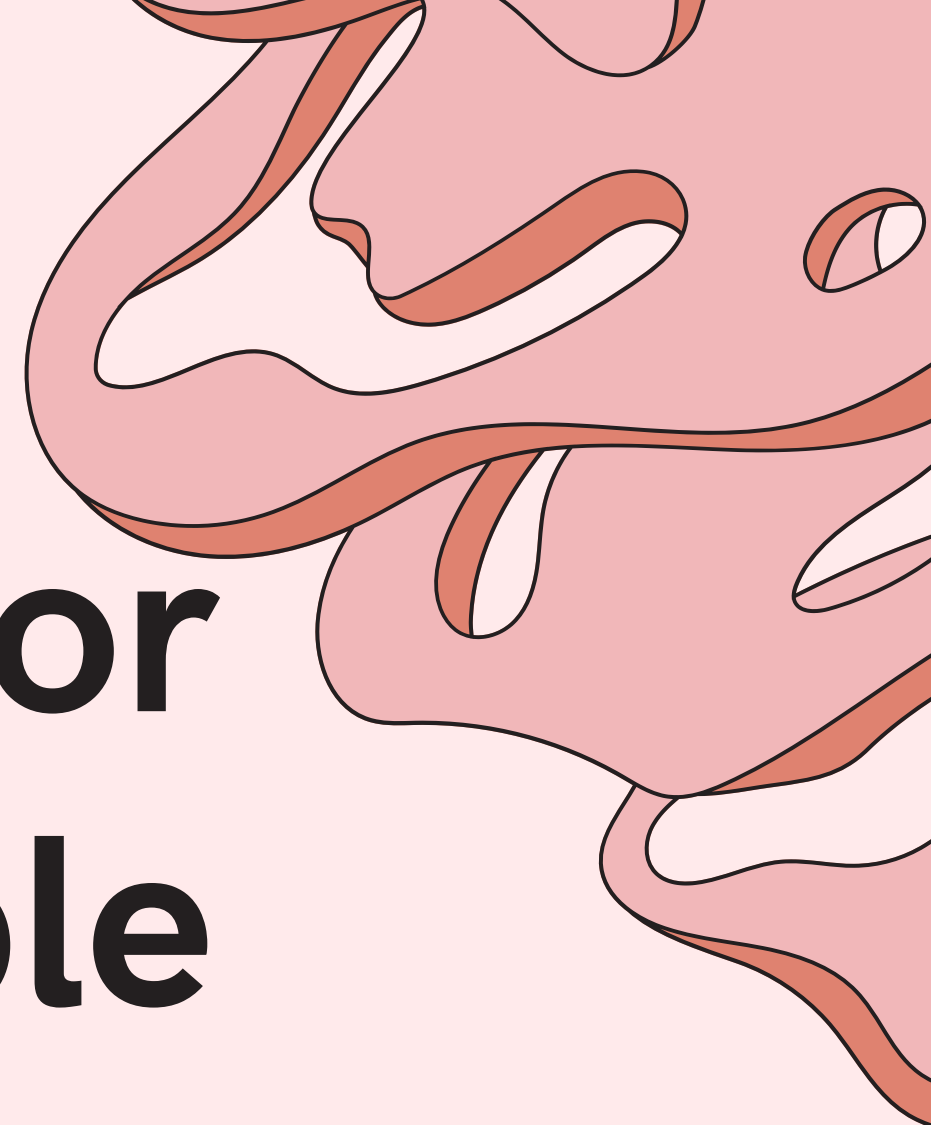
OCAD University Board of Governors

OCAD University Senate

OCAD University Student Union

Ontario Student Trustee Caucus

Sites for possible design intervention

OCAD University: a multi-stakeholder system navigating change

In the past year, the university has undergone major shifts in leadership with a new President, new strategic plan in development, new incoming Chancellor (the former Board of Governors chair), new Board of Governors chair… all while responding to the social health restrictions due to covd-19, and being accountable for its vision and mission statements.

When I saw there was an opening for a student representative on the Board of Governors and the Senate, I was motivated to run in the elections to insert myself into sites of decision making power in both the academic and policy side of governance at the university, as well as the fiscal administration. As a professional coach, I have not had experience with multi-stakeholder systems in arts and post secondary education and see this as a chance to experience as researcher and participant.

I think students perspectives should be voiced especially during a drastic period of change. I saw this as an opportunity to bring creative intervention design to the governance and strategic planning process, and to challenge classic democratic frameworks that reinforce and replicate hierarchical structures prioritizing order and the majority rules, which don't always serve human-centered goals.
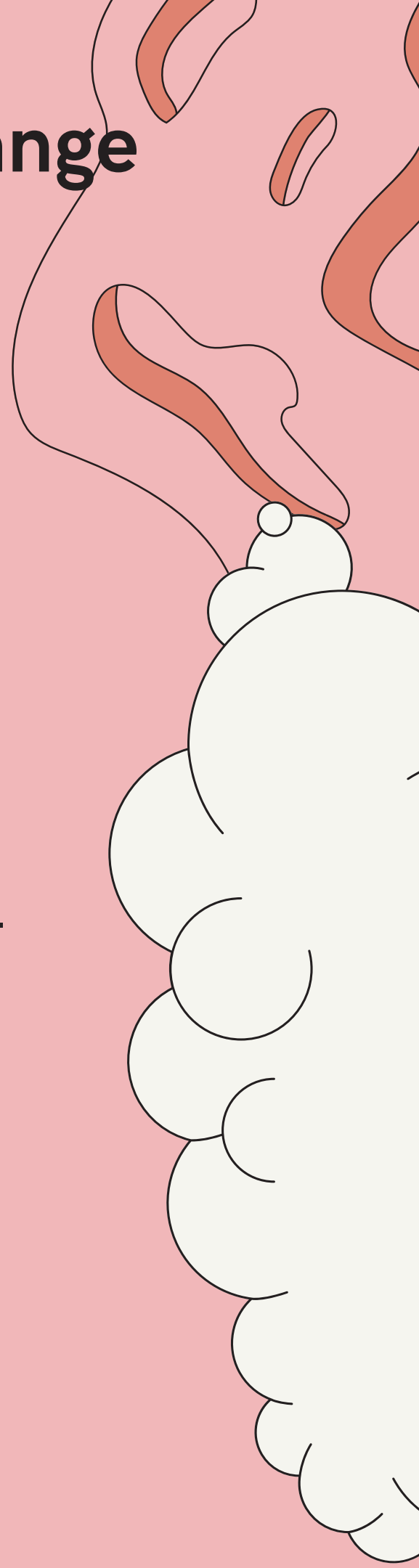
# Phase 2: Wedging - creative interventions & inclusive design

Board of Governors

- I was asked to give input for a student townhall
  - I did not receive an invitation to the student townhall possibly due to an unidentified technical error and was unable to see how design intervention recommendations were applied
- I asked to give input and be included in the BoG 2022 retreat planning and organizing
  - I proposed doing a Deep Democracy activity
  - I was told the consultant is planning the retreat
  - I was acknowledged for my enthusiasm

Senate

- Challenging the grading system as imposing a colonial structure on students self determining their learning and evaluation approach
- Forming Teams group to connect student senators and align on shared issues and hear other perspectives
- Meeting with the Chair of Senate and other student senators to give input on how senate meetings and governance could be more inclusive for students
  - Could structure specific time into the meetings for students voices acknowledging the inherent power dynamic and addressing it with design intervention
  - Spoke about training on governance for students, faculty, etc.
   - Could be a canvas module
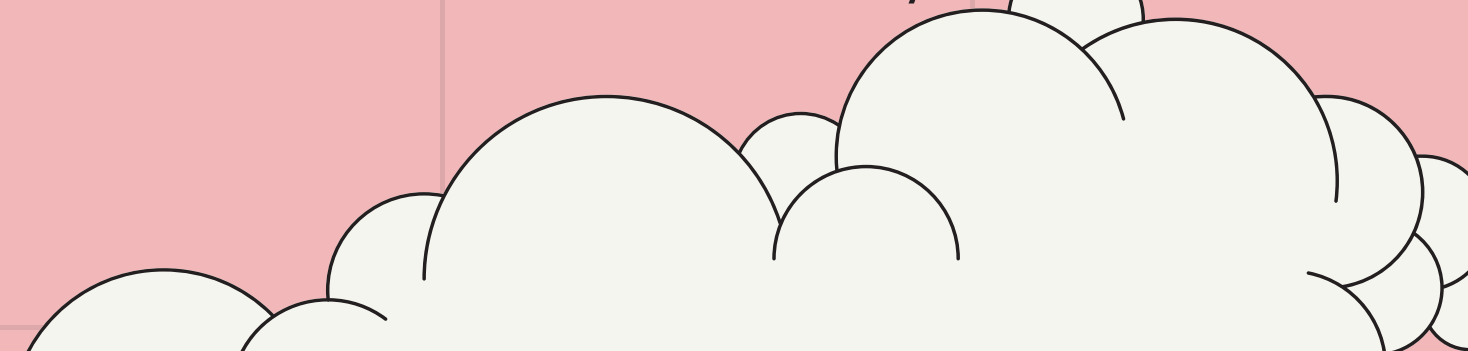
Student Union

- "Sustainability" themed workshop call for submissions
  - Proposed workshop that addresses human burnout as a human sustainability issue
    - automated rejection
- Job vacancy on the grants and awards committee
  - Application required letter of intent, where I wrote about a creative intervention idea I had for decolonizing awards process and challenge competitive models for funding
    - automated rejection
- Vacancy
  - student rep for mature/part-time students
  - Undergraduate Student Caucus
    - I will apply when it is open

Ontario Student Trustee Caucus

- Learning from students from five other post secondary institutions on boards of governors about the different ways similar systems of governance operate, approaches, challenges, etc.
- I will lead a meeting using my human relationship design principles
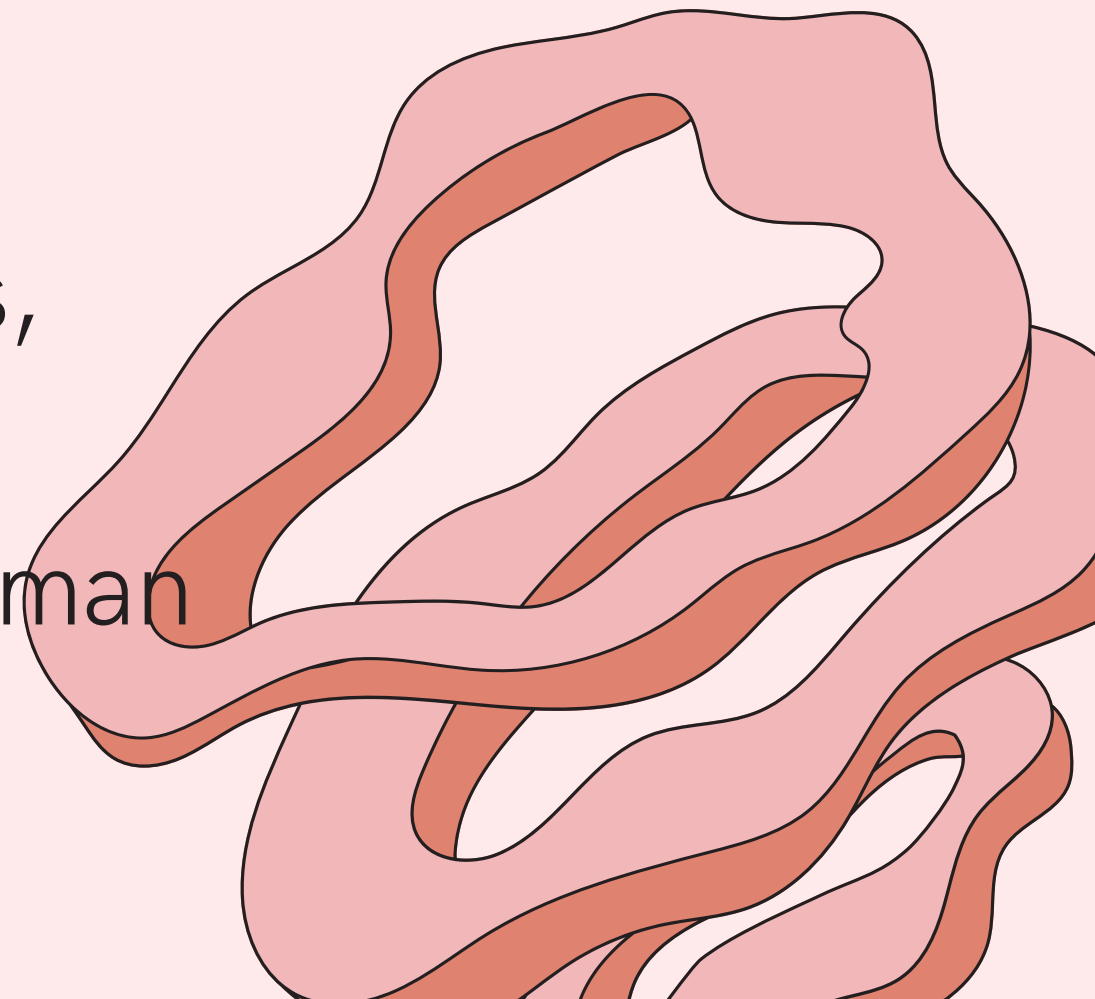
Other Initiatives

- President's "coffee hour"
  - Suggested the need for more design interventions to address some of the issues I experience coming up in the multiple branches of governance I sit in
  - Shared creative intervention idea for awards and funding models
    - positive response and possible opportunity will follow up with vice-provost
  - Shared suggestion for a week long student-centered art residential/retreat

Some next steps for Thesis II to build on work generated from Thesis I

- Get more involved with Student Union
  - apply to relevant vacancies
- Map the OCADU system visually
  - constellate the intervention sites
- Complete "Creative Intervention" grants awards proposal document and pass it on to the vice-provost
- Record presentation with expanded audio explanation
- Continue writing autoethnographic piece on collaborative approaches to inclusive design & creative intervention
- Compile formal resource/reference list
- Create a GitHub repository for assets
- Build an website to navigate the various parts of the documented project
- Create Miro templates for team collaboration design
  - Designed Team Alliance
    - Shared vision values alignment
    - Designing energetic environment
    - Co-Responsibility
    - Conflict protocol