

Lesson 1 Template

The lesson topic I chose for Instruction Session 1 is “Human-Centered Design in Libraries”. This is a component of LIS 702: “Facilitating User Learning and Information Needs” because more and more libraries are using the Design Thinking process, along with Human-Centered Design philosophy, to better serve their patrons. HCD evaluates user needs and information-seeking behavior, like the reference interview on a larger scale. Ultimately, the process is centered in the desire to provide better and more intuitive service to users. I’m particularly interested in this topic because I believe that Design Thinking is a valuable skill that will only become more prominent in the library and information fields. Both my husband and sister-in-law have some experience in User-Experience Design in technology and we’ve had conversations about the importance of building things with the user in mind.

ACRL Framework: “Searching as Strategic Exploration” Design Thinking is a process with the intent of finding solutions to problems that will be adopted. The basic steps are to empathize, define, ideate, prototype, and test. Although this may seem like a linear process, the actual work is much messier, often with repeated steps. This framework states that “searching for information is often nonlinear and iterative”. Furthermore, many of the knowledge practices listed mirror steps in the Design Thinking process. “Determine the initial scope of the task” is parallel to defining the problem. “Utilize divergent (e.g. brainstorming) ...thinking” is the same as ideation. Then, “design and refine needs and search strategies as necessary” could apply to a few different steps.

Goal: Students will become familiar with the steps of the Design Thinking process and the philosophy of Human-Centered Design.

Expected learning outcomes:

1. By the end of the lesson, students should be able to list the Design Thinking process.
2. Students should be able to define Human-Centered Design.
3. They should be able to give examples of when this process could be used in a library environment.

Outline

Introduction-

1st Slide- <1 min.

How many have heard about Anythink Libraries?

- Adams County, CO
- Known in the library world for re-designing their entire system from scratch in 2009 after being considered the worst in state

2nd Slide- 1 min.

- Now looked to by others because of their successful innovations
 - Dewey to “Wordthink” (empower patrons)
 - Eliminating fines
 - Got rid of reference desks – roving librarians
 - Librarians become Guides (no clerical work in view of patrons)
 - Focus on the quality of the space: welcoming/hospitality

3rd Slide- 1 min.

- “Instead of building libraries that organized space around materials, we designed spaces that fit the needs of the people. People need space to think; collaborate; talk; invent; and seek, find and produce information... Our libraries are designed with an intuitive logic and a sense of hospitality. We want people to feel smart, not intimidated.” -Pam Smith

Body of the lesson-

4th Slide- 1 min.

- This leads into definition of Human-Centered Design: “an approach that focuses on fully understanding the perspectives of the people the design is for in each step of the process”.
- It’s a toolbox for improving service by paying attention to the needs of people
 - Investing in this process can save time & money in the future
- HCD is a philosophy that is applied to the Design Thinking process, though they are often used interchangeably
- Nebulous definitions...sometimes people use UX or Service Design when referring to this process

5th Slide- 2 mins.

- Steps
 - Empathize -user research (What groups exist? What problems might they face?)
 - Define- Gather feedback. Synthesize your data & observations to define core problems. Compile logistics.

- Ideate- brainstorm solutions, challenge assumptions. The solid background of knowledge from the first two phases means you can start to “think outside the box”, look for alternative ways to view the problem and identify innovative solutions to the problem statement you’ve created.
- Prototype- launch test pilots/build a representation of your idea
- Test- go back to the drawing board for fine-tuning

6th Slide- 1 min.

- Each of these steps could be talked about on their own but let’s zoom in on Empathy
 - This step’s purpose is to gather information about your users
 - Strategies: personas, interviews, journey mapping
 - Explain images on screen

7th Slide- 2 mins.

Active learning strategy-

- What problems did Anythink address? (List on the board.)
 - Ex. Dewey Decimal system is confusing, fines as barrier, librarians appear inaccessible behind a desk or doing other work, spaces are hard to navigate
- Can you list the emotions that might be tied to these problems? (Empathy is important)

8th Slide- 1 min.

Body of the lesson cont’d-

- Important to remember that this process is not linear but iterative and any of the steps can be revisited
- Design Thinking is especially praised because it encourages failure as part of learning & an opportunity to create something better

9th Slide- <1 min.

Conclusion-

- To me, design thinking is a natural extension of such a service-oriented profession
 - Encourages advocacy, lifelong learning, and continual adaptation
- We’re only going to see more Design Thinking in Libraries, so I think it’s an important skill to learn