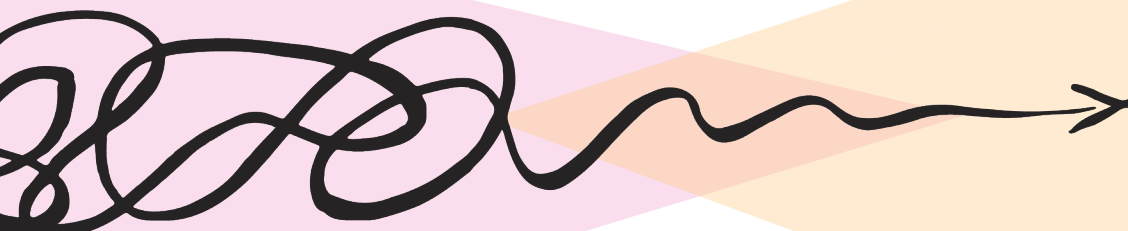




Annual Report

Center for Design Thinking

2020-2021





Elon University | Center for Design Thinking

2020–2021

Elon by Design Team



Director of Design Thinking

Dr. Danielle Lake

Associate Professor

As Elon's Director of Design Thinking, Dr. Lake supported the design and facilitation of over 280 workshops for on- and off-campus communities across the 20-21 academic year. She was honored to help create a team of catalysts (including Elon students, faculty, and staff) to **support cross-institutional design thinking research, teaching, and service**. Dr. Lake also taught two community-engaged courses, published two critical design thinking studies, and designed three new collaborative research projects to study learning outcomes across student, faculty, and staff perspectives.

Dr. Lake's scholarship explores the connections and tensions between wicked problems, design thinking, feminist pragmatist philosophy, and the movement towards **public engagement within education**. Her current projects focus on exploring the long-term impact of collaborative, place- and project-based learning, design thinking, and resilience.

Recent publications can be found at http://works.bepress.com/danielle_lake/



Curricular Catalyst

Dr. Tracey Thurnes

As Elon's Design Thinking Curricular Catalyst, Dr. Thurnes supports the infusion of Design Thinking **pedagogies** across Elon curriculum. Thurnes is advancing Design Thinking curricular initiatives through **communities of practice, consulting** with faculty, and facilitating **workshops**. Over the 20-21 academic year, Thurnes designed and facilitated over eight Community of Practice sessions, presented at three academic conferences, and acted as a Design Forge Guide and presenter.

Dr. Tracey Thurnes is an Associate Professor in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies. Her work focuses on applying design thinking concepts to develop critical thinking skills and professional competencies to positively impact learning outcomes to create solutions-oriented graduates.



Co-Curricular Catalyst

Tyson Glover '17

As Elon's Design Thinking Co-Curricular Catalyst, Mr. Glover creates, supports, and celebrates design thinking **experiences, events, and initiatives**. Over the 20-21 academic year Mr. Glover oversaw Elon's **Pop Up & Play** initiative, designed **workshops**, and acted as a teaching assistant for the Center's **Pathways to Design Thinking course**, and co-hosted the 2021 **Design Forge**.

Tyson Glover '17 was among the first students to graduate from the Design Thinking Studio in Social Innovation. He is a passionate and enthusiastic advocate for the Design Thinking process and social innovation. Tyson is a co-founder of the organization Phoenix Flops and founder of the local start-up Food Drivers.



Research Catalyst

Dr. Wen Guo

As Elon's Design Thinking Research Catalyst, Dr. Guo is advancing the critical study of design thinking pedagogies across higher education. Over the 20-21 academic year Dr. Guo has helped to create the **Design Thinking Teaching and Learning Collaborative**, operated as the **lead qualitative researcher** in a cross-institutional study of design thinking, presented at three academic conferences, and acted as a **research mentor** to Elon students pursuing design thinking research.

Dr. Wen Guo is an Assistant Professor of Art Administration in the Department of Art. She studies the application of design thinking in arts administration education. She intensively infuses design thinking and entrepreneurship into an accessible teaching model for undergraduate students in artistic disciplines for their professional career preparation. She currently serves as a board member of the American Journal of Arts Management and the International Conference on Social Theory, Politics & the Arts.

2020–2021

Student Catalyst Team



Design for America President

Mikayla Ford '22

Communication Design



Social Justice Lead

Soniyah Robinson '23

Journalism



Playful Learning Lead

Jackie Baumann '22

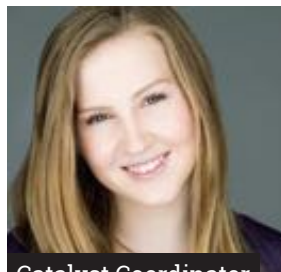
Strategic Communications & Marketing



Center Coordinator

Kait MacIntyre '22

Strategic Communications &
Media Analytics



Catalyst Coordinator

Maggie Cox '23

Engineering



Social Media Lead Strategist

Isabel Manella '21

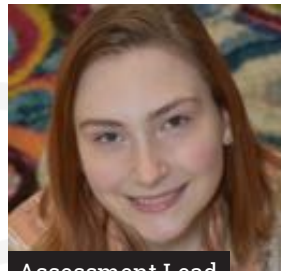
Strategic Communications



Catalyst Team Lead

Brooke Galonek '21

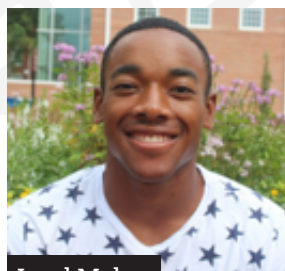
Strategic Communications



Assessment Lead

Rane Parr '24

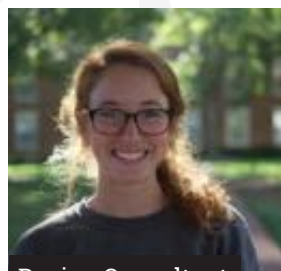
Engineering



Lead Maker

Orlanzel Washington '22

Engineering



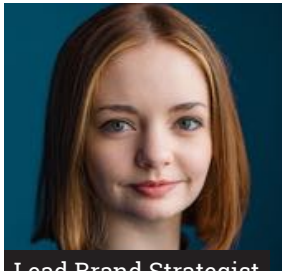
Design Consultant

Hannah Miller '23

Environmental and Sustainability Studies

2020–2021

Center Interns

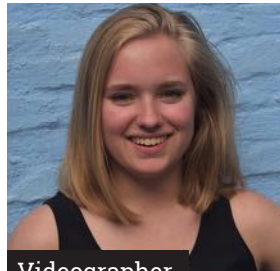


Lead Brand Strategist

Meg Boericke '20 G'21

M.A. Interactive Media
B.F.A Dance and Choreography
B.A. Strategic Communications

Center for Design Thinking
brand identity, marketing, and
promotional materials

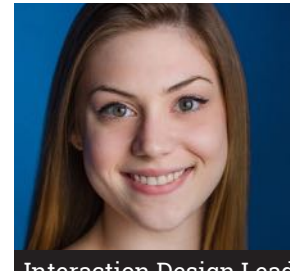


Videographer

Emily Prins '23

Journalism
Cinema and Television Arts

Videography and photography
for the Center and associated
collaboratives



Interaction Design Lead

Olivia James '20 G'21

M.A. Interactive Media
B.F.A Dance and Choreography

Elon By Design & Design Forge
website and Center branding



Elon By {Your} Design Strategist

Katie Murphy '22

Strategic Communications

Integrate Design Thinking into
Elon 101

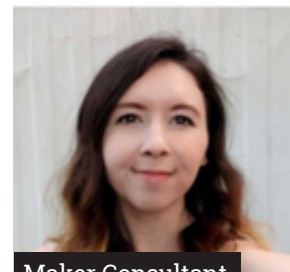


Pop-Up & Play Coordinator

Ciani Foy '22

Communication Design

Pop-Up & Play Coordinator



Maker Consultant

Sarah McDonald '21

Communication Design

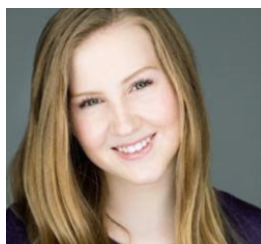
Design Forge 2021

Student Researchers



Morgan Kearns '22

Leadership Fellow



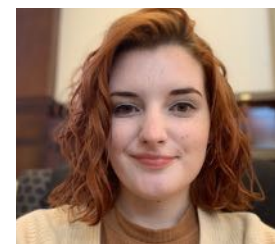
Maggie Cox '23

Engineering



Mikayla Ford '22

Communication Design



Megan Casner '22

Anthropology

2020–2021

The Center's Impact

The Numbers... Fall 2020 – Winter 2021

280

Workshops

5,300+

Participants

The Impact... Fall 2020 – Winter 2021

Impact Likert

7 pt. Scale



6.13

Accessible & Approachable

5.92

Provided Usable Resources

5.91

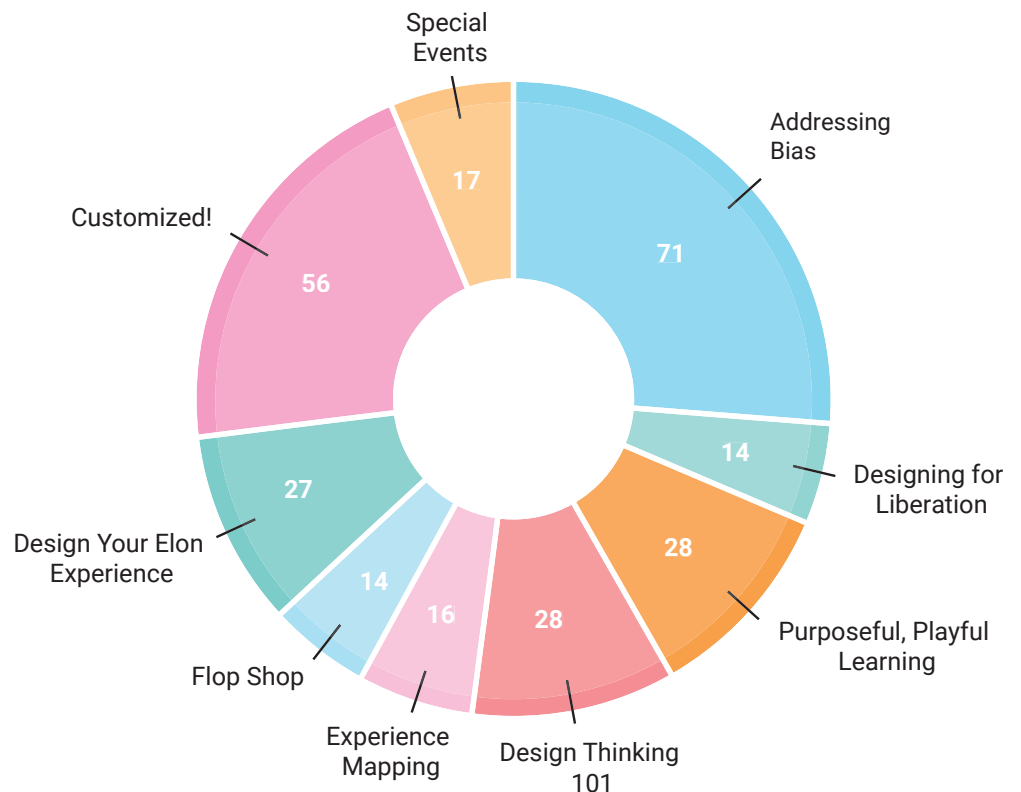
Engaging Experience

5.68

Enhanced My Interest in DT

Workshop

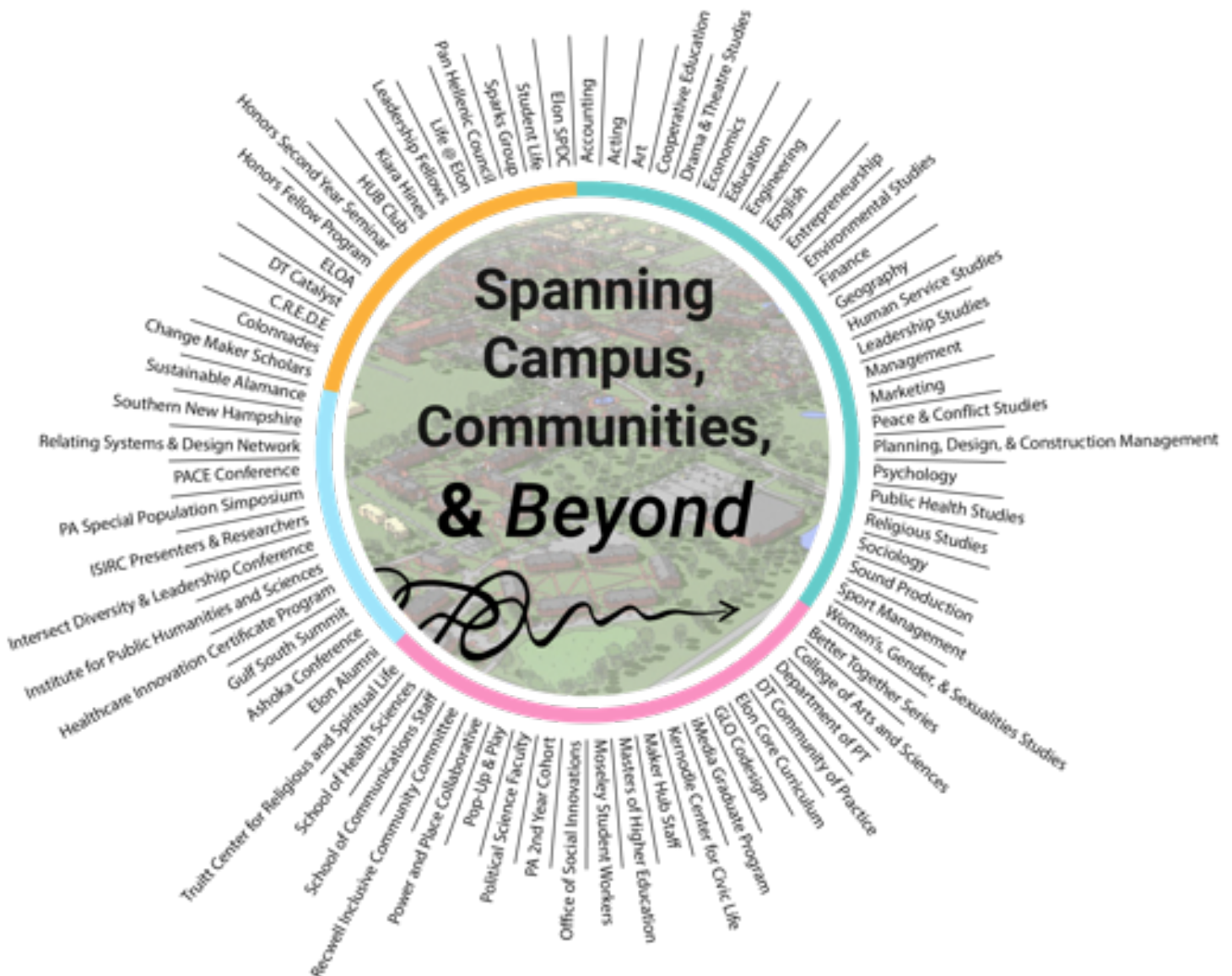
Number of Workshops by Type



2020–2021

The Center's Reach

Across Diverse Communities



Key

- Elon Majors
- Schools, Centers, & Collaboratives
- External Organizations
- Clubs & Organizations



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New Design Thinking Course

During winter term, students from diverse majors across campus interested in design thinking were offered the opportunity to participate in a one credit **"Pathways to Design Thinking"** course. The course supported 10 student-selected projects and 4 client projects via design thinking methods.

Student projects supported the 2021 goals of **the Burlington Downtown Corporation, the Student Professional Development Center, the Kernodle Center for Civic Life, and Elon's Admission office**. One team of students helped the Burlington Downtown Corporation design more inclusive and responsive policies given COVID-19 while another team helped the Student Professional Development Center explore how they might more inclusively engage with students across campus.

Students worked with their organization to design and facilitate design thinking workshops that met their goals. Sara Beth Hardy, manager of the Burlington Downtown Corporation, noted the "board and committee members benefited greatly from the workshop, gaining insight and a new set of tools for sharing and collaborating virtually." Ross Wade, senior associate director of career services in the School of Communications, said students helped the Center develop "tangible next steps they have incorporated" into their work.

Students' personal design projects included an **"Epic Failure Weekend"**, where students were encouraged to fail as much as possible and document their discoveries. At the end of the course, students received a verified digital badge demonstrating facilitation competencies in the design thinking process.

2020-2021

Design For America

In 20-21 Elon's **Design For America Studio** partnered with **Elon Academy** to support the mental health of local youth through research-informed design thinking methods. As a college access and success program for local high school students, Elon Academy's guiding question was:

*How might we integrate **near-peer mentoring activities** that **support the mental health and well-being** of high school students in the Elon Academy summer program?*

In order to build trust and connections across the 2021 summer program, students designed a series of interactive, relationship-rich activities that included sip and paints, play personality archetypes, scavenger hunts, and friendly advice games.

To learn more check out DFA on the **Elon By Design website!**





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Design Thinking

Community of Practice



COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The Center for Design Thinking 20-21 Community of Practice supported the infusion of Design Thinking pedagogies across Elon curricula.

Via collaborative, action-oriented monthly meetings, faculty from across the university **framed, explored, generated, prototyped, and cultivated** Design Thinking projects that met Elon's mission to ensure graduates are creative, culturally agile, ethically grounded, and prepared to address questions of societal importance.

Over the academic year faculty from across the University supported one another in the design of in-class **activities, assignments, semester-long projects, new courses, and even entire programs**. Faculty also shared resources, pedagogically tips & tricks, and lessons learned.

In April, our community of practice partnered with Leadership Faculty Scholars to offer a virtual **"Catalyzing Innovative Pedagogies"** Showcase for interested faculty and staff from across the country. The showcase featured pedagogical innovations, providing a range of strategies and tools designed to help them meet their own curricular goals.

The People



Leslie Blank

Instructor in Psychology and Leadership Studies



Rozana Carducci

Associate Professor of Education and Graduate Director of the Master of Higher Education



Vanessa Drew-Branch

Assistant Professor of Human Service Studies



Wen Guo

Assistant Professor of Arts Administration



Pratheep Kumar

Assistant Professor of Computer Science



Danielle Lake

Director of Design Thinking and Associate Professor



Janet MacFall

Professor of Environmental Studies and Biology



Scott Morrison

Assistant Professor of Engineering



Jonathon Su

Assistant Professor of Engineering



Tracey Thurnes

Associate Professor of Physician Assistant Studies

For more on the 2022 Community of Practice see the [Elon By Design Website!](#)



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Design Thinking

Teaching & Learning Collaborative

The [Design Thinking Teaching and Learning Collaborative](#) is working to reimagine and extend teaching, research, and service using design thinking methods.

The Goals

Teaching

Elon Support the integration of design thinking pedagogies that enhance high impact learning, build lifelong capacities, and transform educational practices.

Research

Engage in collaborative and action-oriented research that seeks to understand the merits and challenges of design thinking practices and translates findings into actionable strategies for personal, professional, and civic endeavors.

Service

Create and sustain a network that extends inclusive and equitable design practices across sectors.



Design Thinking, Teaching, & Learning Collaborative

The Impact

The Study engaged **four universities** in our region, over **22 faculty**, and **three-hundred students**, examining the practices, outcomes, value, and challenges of teaching and learning design thinking in higher education. Initial findings highlight challenges and recommendations, leading us to conclude that a de-disciplined and democratized approach to DT can act as a catalyst for shifting educational practices towards situated, relational, and emergent project-based learning.

The Speaker Series included **practical tools, hands-on activities, and theoretical grounding** in design thinking. Sessions featuring a range of design thinking scholars and practitioners were offered, including from Elon's Dr. Elena Kennedy and Dan Reis, Henry McKoy, Jacqui McLaughlin, Lesley Ann-Noel, and many others. Offered virtually, sessions were attended by a diverse group of faculty, students, staff, and community members from across the United States. Plans for 21-22 are currently underway.

The Members include Elon's Director of Design Thinking Danielle Lake; Assistant Professor of Arts Administration Wen Guo; Liz Chen, Steve Knotek and Jacqui McLaughlin from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Aria Chernik from Duke University; Henry McCoy from North Carolina Central University; and Tsailu Liu from North Carolina State University.



Professional Development Collaborative



The Center was proud to help co-launch [The Professional Development Collaborative](#) in the fall of 2020. The Collaborative is committed to **deepening connections** that contribute to more **inclusive** and **resilient** communities across Alamance County.

Our goals? Offer residents of **Alamance County** new skills and foster connections across our communities through the “Better Together” Series.

The series offered over 8 engaged learning sessions featuring a wide-array of Alamance County experts. Sessions focused on **diversity**, equity, and inclusion, integrating **play** into our work, and harnessing the doer-maker mindset for **resilience**. 30-100 Attendees from across the government, non-profit, business, health, and education sectors attended each session to gain skills and build relationships. The Collaborative is currently seeking new ideas for workshop sessions that will provide value and build relationships across the local community. In an effort to offer accessible sessions to our community, all sessions are a no cost opportunity.

Partnering Organizations



Impact Alamance



Burlington Downtown Corporation



United Way of Alamance County



AmeriCorps Seniors

AmeriCorps Seniors of Alamance County



Alamance Chamber



Elon University



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Design Thinking

Power & Place Collaborative

[The Power and Place Collaborative](#) was formed in the summer of 2020 as a **partnership** between the African American Cultural Arts & History Museum, Elon University, the K.I.N.G. Academy, and the Mayco Bigelow Community Center.

The collaborative's goals are to **examine the power-laden processes of place production and cultivate participatory practice of community co-creation.**

In its first year the Collaborative designed 10 digital stories of Alamance residents who broke barriers and blazed trails across Burlington's African American communities. Edited videos of the stories were unveiled on Tuesday, Nov. 24 and can be found at <https://www.aacahcenter.org/events>

The Power & Place Collaborative grew from a desire to preserve the stories of Black residents who lived through **segregation, integration**, and witnessed events that **continue to affect communities and local politics.** The collaborative is continuing and expanding upon these efforts into 2022. To learn more go to <https://www.elon.edu/u/elon-by-design/about/power-and-place-collaborative/>



The People

Bobbi Ruffin

Director

Mayco Bigelow North Park
Community Center

Shineece Sellers

Executive Director

African-American Cultural
Arts and History Center

Vanessa Drew-Branch

Assistant Professor

Human Service Studies

Sandy Marshall

Assistant Professor

Geography

Danielle Lake

Director of Design Thinking

Associate Professor





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Redesigning for Equity & Social Justice

Workshop Series

Beginning in the fall of 2020, this series is student-designed and led in **partnership** with the [Center for Race, Ethnicity, Diversity Education](#). Each workshop helps participants frame their own journey towards anti-racism and generate actionable opportunities for redesigning oppressive structures, processes, and cultures within their own lives and communities.

The first workshop--**Addressing Implicit Bias**--features the 20-21 Common Reading Biased and focuses on helping students explore their own biases and generate actionable opportunities for redesigning oppressive systems in their own lives.

With over **70 requests for this workshop**, student catalysts began efforts to extend this work. Designing for Liberation, the second workshop in the series, explores the role of design in cycles of oppression and liberation. Participants explore strategies for unlearning and leave with prototypes for creating more inclusive, equitable and just places. In 21-22, students are extending the series through a third workshop focused on anti-racism and allyship.

To request a workshop head to the [Elon-By-Design website!](#)

Workshops Offered

Addressing Implicit Bias: How might we recognize and address our own **implicit biases**? Implicit bias is a distorting lens that influences the way humans think and act in the world. This workshop helps participants frame the role of bias in their own lives, explore the current impact of bias, and generate actionable opportunities for how they might contribute to redesigning oppressive systems.

Designing Liberatory Cycles: How do **cycles of socialization** play a role in our daily lives and impact our mindsets? How might we unlearn oppressive cycles and generate liberatory cycles that support more diverse, equitable, and inclusive places? Participants in this workshop will explore opportunities for unlearning oppressive cycles, generate actionable strategies for transformation, and leave with prototypes for creating more inclusive, equitable, and just places.

Cultivating Anti-Racist Practices: Where are we each at in our own journey towards **anti-racism**? Where do we want to be? How might we get there? This workshop explores prominent themes from Stamped, helping participants frame the impact of histories of oppression. Key terms, such as ally, accomplice, actor, segregationist, assimilationist, and antiracist, are explored. Participants leave with actionable prototypes for supporting their own journey towards anti-racism while staying resilient.



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Design Forge 2021

About

Beginning in 2018, The Design Forge is an annual 2-day convening of design thinking practitioners, educators, and thought leaders hosted **at Elon University**. The Forge harnesses design thinking to address different issues challenging higher education and our communications.

This year the forge brought together **23 university & community teams** in order to imagine, design, and prototype responses to the question: *How might university design thinking efforts help us examine the power-laden processes of place production and cultivate **participatory practices of co-creation**?*

Break Down

Days Together

2

University-Community
Projects

23

Zoom Attendees

108

In-person Attendees

30





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Design Forge 2021

Notable Events

Keynote with Poet Laureate
Jaki Shelton Green



Jaki Shelton Green is the first African American and the third woman to serve as North Carolina's ambassador for poetry and the spoken word.

She spoke on the question: How can the design of your project ensure the community members in your place remain the curators of their stories?

Workshop with
Josina Vink & Creative Reaction Lab

Crafting Our Narrative, was a Zine Making Workshop designed to help project teams design a shared vision for their work together over the 2021-22 academic year.

Additional keynote workshops were facilitated by **Creative Reaction Lab** and focused on mapping power, inviting diverse cocreators, and journey mapping next steps.

Forging Opportunity

At the end of the two days participants left with...

Design strategies, project prototypes, and a network of support

Outcomes: **Resources** that showcase PB stories, strategies, & tools.

Outcomes: **Network** of support via **Forge-in-Between** convenings.

So what's next? This two-day conference was simply the beginning of our network connections and projects. We want to continue to build this network and support different projects.

Opportunities: Codesign with **collaborators**

Opportunities: Participate in Elon's **speaker series**

Opportunities: Share their **story**





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2021-2022

Design Thinking Scholarship

Completing the CiCLE: Assessing longitudinal ecosystems change to improve community-based and design-centric immersive learning.

Lake, D., Motley, P. & Moner, W.

[View Study](#)

This study explores the benefits and challenges of immersive, design thinking, and community-engaged pedagogies for supporting social innovation within higher education; assess the impact of such approaches across stakeholder groups through long-term retrospective analysis of transdisciplinary and cross-stakeholder work; offer an approach to ecosystems design and analysis that accounts for complex system dynamics in higher education partnerships.

This paper identifies how innovative higher education programs are forced to navigate structural, epistemological, and ethical quandaries when engaging in community-involved work. Sustainable innovation requires such programs to work within institutional structures while simultaneously disrupting entrenched structures, practices, and processes within the system.

Social innovation in higher education could benefit from harnessing lessons from collective impact and ecosystem design frameworks. This study closes these gaps by advancing an ecosystems model for both long-term and longitudinal assessment that captures the impact of such approaches across stakeholder groups and developing an approach to designing and assessing community-involved collaborative learning ecosystems (CiCLE).

Design Thinking? A Cross-Course and Cross-Sector Mixed-Methods Examination of Practices and Outcomes

Lake, D., Flannery, K. & Kearns, F.

[View Study](#)

This mixed method study investigated design thinking (DT) practices and outcomes from across disciplinary frameworks within one institution of higher education. Building upon prior DT studies, it examined three interlocking research questions: What DT practices are being implemented across the curriculum? What kinds of outcomes do faculty observe? What are the significant relationships between particular practices and observed outcomes? Thirty-five courses were examined via a faculty survey adapted from Liedtka and Bahr (2019), and a semi-structured interview created by Lake, Ricco, and Whipps (2018). In alignment with liberal arts educational practices, the most frequently utilized DT practices included working in teams that recognize diverse contributions and engaging in active listening in order to find shared meaning. Consistent with expectations for project- and team-based courses, faculty felt such practices yielded valued outcomes, concluding DT practices built trust across teams and increased the quality of solutions. Relationships between practices and outcomes revealed the utilization of more ethnographic tools was associated with a lower frequency of expanding relationships and resources, and that a greater focus on design criteria to find an ideal solution hampered efforts towards trust building. These findings suggest DT requires time and trust which can be constrained by the imposed deadlines of semester-based projects. The survey and interviews pointed to both similarities and differences between disciplines in DT practices.



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2021-2022

Looking Ahead

The FORGE IN-BETWEEN Launches

The Forge In-Between is a **translocal learning community** emerging from 2021 Design Forge. It is designed to cultivate more creative and responsive place-based projects, foster relationships and networks across places, and provide iterative, collaborative accountability for high impact participatory place-making projects across 21 university-community project-teams.

FRAME & EXPLORE		GENERATE & PROTOTYPE		CULTIVATE	
What's happened since the Forge?		What have we learned thus far?		What happens next?	
Tuesday Sept. 28 3:30-5:00 pm	Friday Oct. 1 12:00-1:30 pm	Tuesday Jan. 25 12:00-1:30 pm	Friday Jan. 28 3:30-5:00 pm	Tuesday April 19 3:30-5:00 pm	Friday April 22 12:00-1:30 pm

The Center for Design Thinking Launches First-Year “Elon By {Your} Design” Initiative

“Elon By {Your} Design” is headed for **Elon 101** courses! This 50-minute workshop assists students in the creation of a **holistic** Elon plan. Design Thinking Student Catalysts will facilitate the workshop through hands-on activities and discussions that integrate best practices from Elon’s Act, Belong, Commit initiative, our FIRE toolkit, and tricks for building connections and learning from others. The workshop will help students design and navigate their own Elon pathway and create valuable on- and off-campus connections.

The Center Welcomes 21-22 Team Members

Danielle DaSilva '24 Applied Mathematics	Helene Bergere '23 Project Management & Economic Consulting	Sonali Schroder '24 Arts Administration	Sarah Gaynor '24 Engineering	Ellie Levine '22 Marketing
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