Sample Syllabus

Primary Instructors
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Design Thinking
Design thinking is a process for reliably producing creative solutions to nearly any challenge. In this session, we'll learn about Stanford’s methodology for innovation that combines creative and analytical approaches, and requires collaboration across disciplines. A lot of the techniques sound fairly simple, but are remarkably powerful when applied to solve challenging business and human problems.

Brainstorming
Brainstorming helps identify numerous solutions to a given problem in a short time frame. In this action-oriented session, we'll learn about the rules for effective brainstorming and then try it out on a real problem. We'll wrap up the session by learning how to brainstorm effectively in a cross cultural setting.

Using Prototyping for Inspiration
It’s much easier to communicate an idea when you can see it and try it. In this session, we’ll learn about methods for rapid prototyping of products and services. Then we’ll explore the implications for cross cultural prototyping.

Design Challenge – Hands On
The best way to learn design thinking is by doing. We'll jump start you into a design challenge by describing real research from a recent design challenge in another country to help you build empathy for the user’s needs. Then you’ll spend the rest of this session going through the design cycle – exploring the needs of your users, iterating ideas to develop an unexpected range of possible solutions, and creating rough prototypes for soliciting user feedback.

Designing for Others
One of the cornerstones of design thinking at Stanford is understanding the needs of potential users of a product or service. In this session, we will take you through a design exercise that illustrates the effect on innovation of understanding user needs.
Fundamentals of Cross-Cultural Design
There are numerous approaches to cross-cultural design. In this session, Prof. Hinds will introduce you to several dominant perspectives on cross-cultural design, using rich examples, and discuss the opportunities and pitfalls of each.

Empathic Design
Empathy is central to innovating products and services. In this hands-on session, we will delve into the processes by which empathy can be developed and how it is used in innovation, particularly focused on ethnographic interviews and creating metaphors.

Reframing to Generate Insights
Being able to reframe a problem in a new and novel way is central to innovative design. In a fun and lively exercise, you will get experience reframing a problem and considering the implications for innovating products and services.

Storytelling & Narratives
Storytelling is an effective tool for communicating problems and trying out different perspectives. In this session we’ll look at a story we’re all familiar with from many different perspectives and draw parallels to culturally driven exploration of problem spaces.

Innovating from Stories
Where do you go after you’ve created your story? We’ll hear another perspective on the problem you explored in the Empathic Design session, delving deeper into the role that culture and environment plays in developing people’s behavior and needs to generate solutions.

Using Reflections for Inspiration
At the end of each day, we will lead you through an exercise reflecting on your insights for the day. Each reflection session will introduce you to a new tool used in design thinking to expand your repertoire and encourage you to think creatively about how you might apply learnings from the day.