

Personal Course Reflection

Learning goals

The PDP I wrote at the beginning of this course was mostly based on the expectations I thought the coaches would have, which turned out not helping my development. After asking for help and a fifteen minute talk with two coaches, I felt significantly more energized and motivated. I came back to my plan and altered the learning goals to fit my professional identity, vision, and ideas for my future career. For the record, I want to work towards a sort of creative director role. An ambitious plan that will take years of experience and finding my path, but I think it suits my qualities of being a structured planner that oversees the process and likes to take the lead in team projects. I often hear that I am a connector that brings people together which is something I am further exploring at the moment.

Project management

Taking the lead within group projects comes back to my first learning goal set after the PDP modification. I was in a slightly bigger team with people that are really focused on the technical aspects of the project. I tried to offer structure in the Miro board, meetings and overall process. I also paid special attention to highlighting the user and problem statement perspectives, which was a nice combination with the technical standpoint of others.

Another remark to be made regards the high pace of this project. I noticed that at some points, we were struggling to keep up and hesitant to take steps. I worked on getting more things done by clearly defining tasks and dividing them among the team members including myself. At the end of the course, especially when writing the final report, I took a step back in directing what needed to be done. To be fair, I think 'assigning' tasks to team members would have been better because I now felt almost too proactive in getting all to-do's ticked off. A long time ago I got the feedback that this can prohibit others from taking their place, which might have been the case now too. Next time I will do my best to regroup and discuss, so that everyone can play their part.

Pace of the project

About the pace within this course, I would like to highlight that I have almost surprised myself with what we were able to achieve. I am a perfectionist which makes me linger around and prohibits me from moving forward within the process. The strict planning of this course pushed me to break this habit and move on quickly. Not all decisions were as conscious as they could have been, but overall I believe we did a really good job. We found an interesting direction and solution that fits existing literature. We provided value for the client and I am proud of our end result, also because of my personal connection to the topic.

Data-enabled design reflection

Lastly, I would like to reflect on data-enabled design in general. What I find most interesting about this is combining what people are actually (unconsciously) doing with what they are thinking and saying, as sometimes, these are not in line. I think my strength still lies in qualitative research methods, although collaboration with someone that is strong in quantitative studies might be a killer combination. Especially using data as material for conversation has been a delight. It helped to steer the study and to get to new, noteworthy insights quickly. I realise it also

helps to find focus because with a prototype, it is impossible to study everything. You can start off broad but need to scope down quickly to really find relationships in data gathered with just a few sensors.

Data-enabled design in the future

I feel like a critical note must be made towards the technical aspect of the whole data-enabled design process. Arduino or other prototyping skills are key for the success and added value of this approach. To me, this is difficult because working with technology in that sense is not part of my skill set. Rethinking how to implement the data-enabled design process is something I feel would be important to make the approach more accessible to others that might also benefit from this way of working. Utilizing existing products like smart watches or for example the easy to set up DataFoundryBot might be the way to go. Maybe, next time this could be presented as a viable option more up front.

As I can clearly see the value, I will continue to reflect on how I can implement data-enabled design in my individual graduation project where I don't have the help of my team members. Overall, I am proud of our end result and keen to learn more about the topic of diabetes. It even made me wonder if I can create a prototype version of our design, with Arduino, to use within my own family. Something that, with my doubts about working with Arduino in mind, is an unexpected statement in itself.

DBM160 Data-enabled design PDP

Anika Kok - 1508482 - 23/04/2021

Combining data streams

My first learning goal regards experiencing the data-enabled design approach in general. My strength in the design process lies with research techniques like having interviews and focus groups. By boosting my technology and realisation skills, and by learning how to choose and combine multiple data streams, I believe I will improve my personal toolkit and projects. This also fits my reason to start following the master: I wanted to learn how to design for what people actually do, rather than what people think and say they do. Thus, I want to utilize the course project to experience if sensory data and interview data will lead to different stories and insights. The concrete learning goal is: *"I want to choose and combine multiple data streams (sensory and interview) in the course project to study whether the insights will contradict or complement each other. This will be translated into the group project's report, in which I will write (part of the) the discussion chapter that highlights to what insights the combination of data has led."*

Zero technical skills

At the moment of starting this course, my skills regarding Arduino and data processing are practically zero. I previously studied ICT & Media Design where I only learned front-end web development. During my pre master, I followed the course Creative Programming, after which I never really worked with Arduino anymore. I know the logic behind code but find it very difficult to properly set-up an Arduino circuit that works as intended. I have also never worked with Data Foundry, OOC SI, etcetera. My goal and expectation of this course is therefore to overcome the threshold of working with Arduino: *"I will create at least one working prototype during this course. This prototype has to be able to measure data from at least two sensors and send this to a platform so that the input can be retrieved."* I will not work on this prototype alone, but learn from my team members that as I have already experienced, can teach me a lot!

Professional identity and vision

As described in my general PDP, I am really interested in the approach and philosophy of Calm Technology. I believe that context is super important to determine what communication and interaction would be suitable for specific situations. 'Calm' in a quiet, bright environment is different from 'calm' in a dark, loud space. Therefore, my learning goal is: *"I want to learn how to plan a user study that makes use of sensory data and/or monitoring tools, (rather than interviews or focus groups) to gain insights of the design context related to the project. I will do this by making a protocol for my FMP project, within the timeframe of the course DBM160."* Because this learning goal is outside the course project, I will deliver a written summary that informs about the protocol, and how I envision to use the data collected in combination with all other insights that have been and will be collected.