Old Dominion University

ODU Digital Commons

2021

Introduction to the Special Section on Designing for Learning in a Pandemic

John Baaki
Old Dominion University, jbaaki@odu.edu

Original Publication Citation

INTRODUCTION TO THE SPECIAL SECTION ON DESIGNING FOR LEARNING IN A PANDEMIC

John Baaki, *Old Dominion University*

Lately, it occurs to me
What a long, strange trip it's been.

   Truckin' by The Grateful Dead

A STRANGE TRIP INDEED

Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, a project team continued educating electrical line workers across four U.S. locations. The Center for Engineering Education and Outreach redesigned an in-person internship program by finding ways to simulate tinkering, design reviews, and troubleshooting activities. A collaborative four-day international seminar networking 10 European universities from eight different countries went virtual. An online experience replaced an all-expenses-paid six-day residential summer experience at NASA's Johnson Space Center. Designers embraced—cancellation is not an option—and found a way to engage fifth-grade students in applying science and mathematics concepts related to building a Mars colony. The show did go on in Zoom with a play that integrated students' emotional struggles due to pandemic isolation. Indeed, the past year, and then some, has been strange.

A SHARED TRIP

The following six design cases share experiences that you more than likely faced. As designers, when the pandemic hit, we found ourselves pivoting, redesigning, replacing, and adjusting. We kept moving forward and designed ways to continue educational and learning events. A thread of perseverance is woven through these six design cases. The authors embraced the pandemic situation, engaged in designing impactful design interventions, and, just maybe, in a moment of reflection, would admit they enjoyed the trip.

OUR NEXT TRIP

As you read the design cases, you will certainly find yourself in the moment of the design. Staring straight at a pandemic that had become a part of our lives, the authors share how designers and project teams rallied to design, develop, and implement interventions effectively and efficiently. But, what about the next moment of design? As designers, moving forward, what do we take from the six design cases? We encourage you to enjoy each case's moment and encourage you to reflect on what the case means for your design future.

THANKS FOR THE TRIP

A wonderful journal like this is not a one-person show. I had a great time as the special section guest editor. I thank all the designers who submitted a proposal and the authors who contributed the six design cases. Special thank you to Elizabeth Boling, Monica Tracey, and Gordon Rowland for reviewing submissions and providing feedback to the authors. Those behind the green curtain who make certain that each IJDL edition is of the highest quality cannot be forgotten. Thanks to Justin Sentz, Ahmed Lachheb, Colin Gray, and Tanner Phillips.

Enjoy Designing for Learning in a Pandemic.

John Baaki is an Assistant Professor of Instructional Design and Technology at Old Dominion University. His research interest is how empathic design impacts instructional design and performance improvement.