Reflection questions for Evaluating Design in Social Media Activism Class Activity

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What does instructor labor look like?

- The instructor will need to choose campaign examples that fit their class best. The ones provided here are curated to the theme of Indigenous ecological knowledge and social change, but classes with other themes or topics might not connect well with these examples. If an instructor is not familiar with Instagram or the skill of screen shotting images and formatting them in Google docs, this task could be daunting and take a lot of time.
- Once effective examples are chosen and put into the digital materials, the lesson is easy to implement and self-contained because a lot of the materials can be externalized to Google docs or another e-learning platform, allowing the lesson to run itself once the materials are all linked and the students are directed to them in the right order.
- The grading labor is multifaceted yet scalable with the actual campaign, the in-class presentation, and the reflection, but the instructor can choose to eliminate or reduce the presentation or reflection. To lighten the load without eliminating the secondary assignments entirely, I would only require the students to *either* present *or* turn in a reflection. There are pros and cons to both approaches, labor-wise: Student presentation days lighten the instruction load on those particular days, aside from managing the time of the class, and the grading can often be completed while the student presents, but the instructor loses instruction days. This presentation still allows the student significant reflection on their project. Only having students turn in written reflections opens up class sessions for further instruction and requires reading and assessing short essay reflections on the instructor's out-of-class time. Another con of this is that students miss the community-building opportunity of sharing their work with each other.
- This class was developed in collaboration with the multimedia literacy librarian, who created the design principles presentation and facilitated the class for the first two iterations of the assignment. After observing the librarian teach, the instructor was able to facilitate the session on her own and further customize the presentation to fit specific class needs and time constraints. Notes are provided within the design presentation, as well as a link to a short video on design principles that can replace part of the presentation.

What scaffolding/preparation needs to happen?

- Students benefit from a discussion of the affordances and pitfalls of social media activism, and [this article](#) can be a good introduction to that larger discussion.
- Students will ultimately need instruction around the use of Instagram and its algorithm (or whatever social media platform the instructor chooses) if the instructor wants to assess them on the use of the platform itself. The instructor should not assume every student is familiar with a certain platform.

- Canva is a free and user-friendly tool for creating graphics, but students will need time to learn how to use it before completing the assignment. Instructors will benefit from exploring Canva on their own so they can provide a brief overview and answer questions.

What does it look like for students to successfully engage with this?

- Participation in in-class activities: the small group design principles evaluation, the design challenge, as well as in-class discussions about personal social media use and the affordances and pitfalls of social media activism offer students the opportunity to engage with the basics of design as well as some of the larger questions around social media and its value.
- Arc of appreciation: When the students do the small group activity in the lesson provided, they are often critical of the campaign examples provided, but then when they make their own, they realize it can be harder than they thought to execute the project and show new appreciation for the time and effort social media activists put into their content. They realize that it takes a lot of time and attention to distill larger ideas into bite-sized pieces that are both intellectually digestible and visually appealing.
- Strong reflection and peer feedback: students showcase their engagement during the reflective exercises at the end of the project, either a presentation or a written reflection. Students may not be gifted in digital design, so these reflective exercises allow them to show their process and engagement over the course of the project regardless of their visual skill. Presentations at the end also give students the opportunity to engage their peers' work and give feedback. A peer review mid-project also achieves this.

What should people consider in adapting this?

- Adapt to different social media platforms
- Adapt visual examples depending on class topic and social media platform
- Adapt design principles given media context
- Adapt design challenge to something more aligned with class topic or aspect of assignment rather than a separate challenge
- Adapt timescale of assignments and lesson plan to length of class session/semester