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9:30–10:45 AM
Open Work, Open Play

Playing With Your Food:
A Foodways Research Approach to Teaching Inclusive Design

Guiding Quote

"Design thinking and making are pedagogical efforts that involve creating opportunities that let students attempt to solve problems that are complex in nature" (Tham, 2021, p. 18)

Key Terms

- Culinary capital: the status and power conveyed through "certain foods and food-related practices" (Naccarato & Lebesco, 2012, p. 3)
- Design thinking
  - An "approach to solving complex problems, what folks in the literature have called *wicked problems*, problems that don't present easy solutions or one-time solutions…problems that require recursive attention and consideration of contextual factors" (Purdy qtd. in Pope-Ruark, 2019, 439)
  - "a combination of a methodology and mindset for innovative problem solving" that "facilitates a problem-based mindset—a designerly way of thinking" (p. Tham, 2021, pp. 8–9)
- Food studies: "the academic practice and teaching about food, agriculture, food systems, and food culture" (Julier, 2019, p. 21)
- Foodways: "approaching culinary practices and eating habits as social research that intersects with public advocacy" (Alvarez, 2017, p. 151)

Inquiries & Project Goal

There were four central research questions based on Alice Julier's (2019) work I wanted students to explore in their foodways research project:

- How is food "part of a larger system"?
- In what ways is the system "shaped by conflicting or consensual economic, social, material, and cultural goals?"
- Who benefits from the system?
- And "How is power—and inequality generally—inscribed in these skills, practices, ways of organizing sustenance and social life?"

Through spending the semester conducting foodways research, our goal was to examine food and power and use food to tell stories. To do this, students would need to develop some technical skills, and that's where using open-source programs comes in.

Pedagogical Implementation

- Teaching students how to code by reading: "Instead of beginning with writing code, perhaps we should start by reading it. Just as we introduce children to the sounds of language, we might begin by learning to listen to what the code is doing and saying" (Quigley 2022)

Takeaways

- Introduce HTML and coding earlier in the semester.
- Offer fewer final project templates to simplify projects.

- Develop a set of class templates to decrease the mental labor it takes to simultaneously review 10 unique websites.
- Build in more in-class coding and mini-website review days to foster collaborative problem-solving.

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