

THE FINAL PROJECT: the design brief

>> **The final project is a written paper, two prototypes, and a PowerPoint presentation.** The **paper** (approximately 2 pages) will respond to each of the sections below. The two **prototypes** will be 1) either an illustration (if the project is digital) or a physical mockup, and 2) a user scenario (like a comic) to illustrate how the concept might be used. The **PowerPoint presentation** will explain the entire design process (from research to problem to concept to prototype). The PowerPoint is a visual version of the written paper.

>> **The design challenge**

In this course, we've investigated the social causes of "disaster" (poverty, gender, poor political infrastructure, etc); studied several case studies (Haiti, China, Nicaragua) to understand what makes different communities particularly vulnerable; proposed design solutions to various problems (board games, mobile apps, children's toys); considered whether social media will change the world – and if so, how – by studying Shirky vs. Gladwell and looking at the mobile apps from the Haiti earthquake; and discussed the real problems that emerge for victims, first responders and emergency managers during a disaster (reenactment). Now, *given this background, your challenge is to identify a real problem that emerges prior to, during or after a "disaster" and propose a design solution to this problem.*

Challenge: Identify a question or problem that emerges from disaster preparation or response. Contextualize this question/problem in thorough research and in a particular community. Propose a solution to respond to this question/problem, prototype it, and present your process. This is a 20-hour project, not a 2-hour project.

>> Design question or problem (1 paragraph)

Excellent questions/problems are grounded in research and precedents, not assumptions.

Deaf and hearing-impaired victims often struggle to communicate their needs to first responders. How can they communicate their needs to hearing responders?

Victim needs and volunteer expertise is often mismatched. How can victims be matched with volunteers who can respond to their needs?

Homeless individuals are often underserved because they may not be connected to a network of family or friends in an affected disaster. How might their needs be more carefully considered in a disaster?

Individuals who depend on daily medication may need immediate medical assistance after a disaster. How can they be served after a disaster strikes?

>> Concept (1-2 paragraphs)

The concept is the solution that you propose to respond to the stated question/problem. Describe its functionality (how it works) and how it will solve the stated question/problem. How much does it cost? Where can it be found? When would users use it?

>> Research (2 paragraphs)

The concept must be grounded in research that establishes the problem/question as real and important. In other words, the problem/question can't be imaginary or based exclusively on prior knowledge. The research must present evidence that this is a real problem, and must discuss a specific case study/example (ie, Haiti, Japan, China, etc.)

>> Audience (1 paragraph)

Who is it for? Who will use it? When would they use it?

>> Prototype #1: Physical model or drawn illustration

Draw it or make it. Include all aspects of its functionality, which may involve front/back/side views. The purpose of this prototype is to accurately represent the look and feel of the prototype. If the concept is physical (game, book, toy, garment, etc) then the prototype should be physical; if the concept is digital (app, game, map, etc), then the prototype should be drawn.

>> Prototype #2: User Scenario Comic OR video

Using a comic or video (imagine an infomercial), explain how and why this concept would be used in real life. The purpose of this prototype is to illustrate the functionality of the concept. There is no page-length or video-length requirement for this prototype; to be successful, it must fully explain its functionality.

>> Precedents (3 paragraphs)

Identify 3 projects (including at least 1 example from the mobile apps from Haiti) and discuss their similarities to your own work. Precedents are projects that are similar to (and yet different from) your own proposed work. They provide inspiration. For example, a mobile app that matches volunteers with victims might use a dating website as a precedent.

DEPENDING ON THE AUDIENCE + PROBLEM, POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS INCLUDE:

Digital or analog (physical) games

Garments (clothing)

Toys

Mobile apps

Shelters

Inventions (tools)

Awareness campaigns / books / stories

AN EXCELLENT PROJECT

- Will identify a compelling problem that truly has not been resolved in disaster response, and which is grounded in research
- Uses prototypes to fully explain the look/feel/functionality of the concept
- Will solicit feedback from aid workers or other organizations involved in disaster response
- Proposes an innovative solution that does not resemble any current solutions

A LESS-THAN-EXCELLENT PROJECT:

- Will be grounded exclusively in assumptions or prior knowledge, rather than research
- Will propose a question that is not “real” or compelling or that has already been solved
- Will propose a concept that resembles current work
- Will use prototypes but may not fully answer questions about how it works, how it looks, or why it’s important

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can we work together? Possibly, provided that you can explain how your collaboration is essential to the completion of the project.

Q: _____

A: _____

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
21 Create a Google Doc + share it with cjenkins@nycischool.org + create headings for each of the topics above so I can comment on your progress Begin by identifying problem/question + doing research	22	23	24	25
28/HOLIDAY	29	30	31 JENKINS' LAST DAY	1
4	5	6	7 NO SCHOOL	8
11 / FINAL PRESENTATIONS	12 / LAST DAY			

