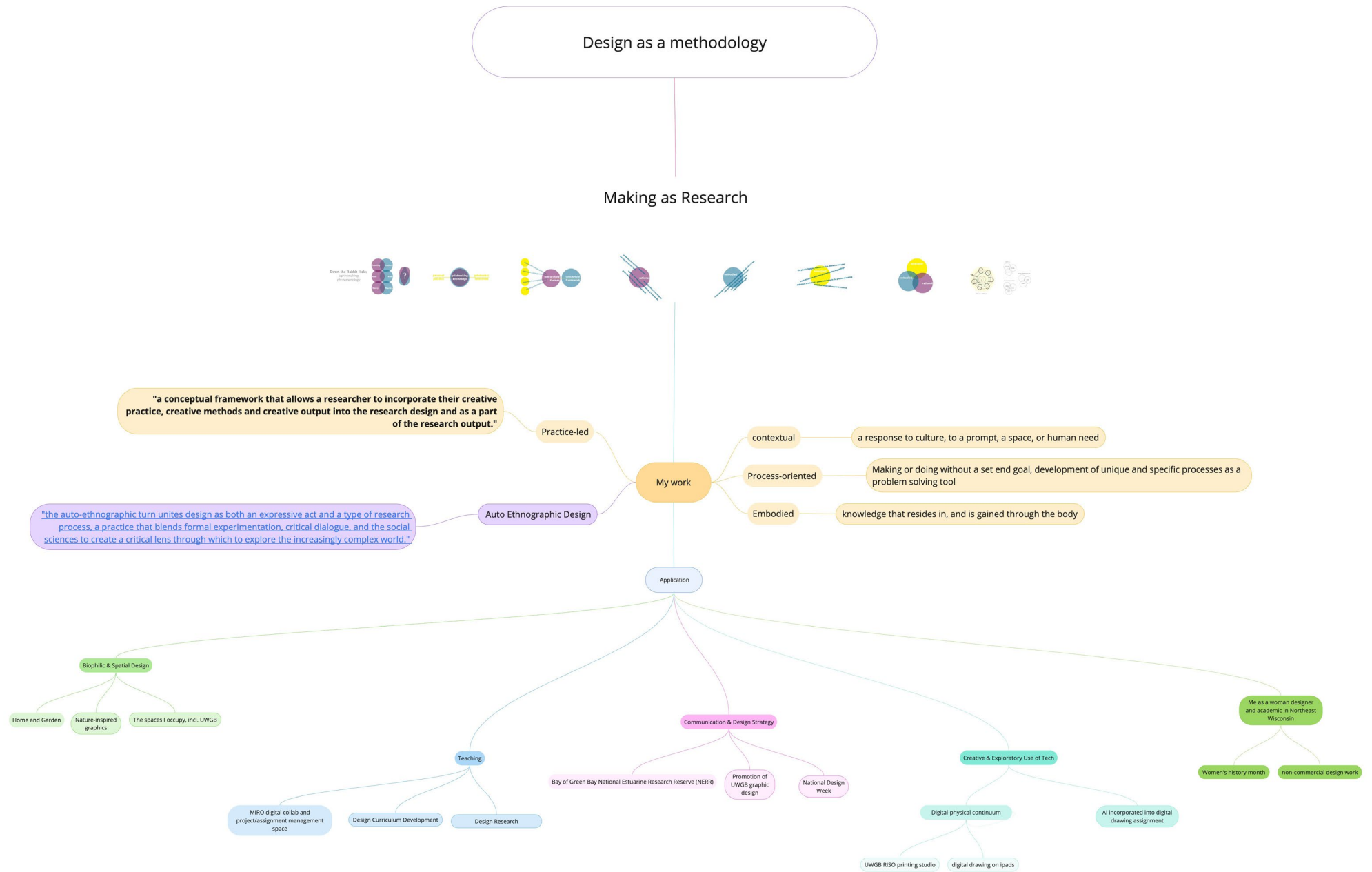


Abbey Kleinert, MFA

Assistant Professor of Art and Design

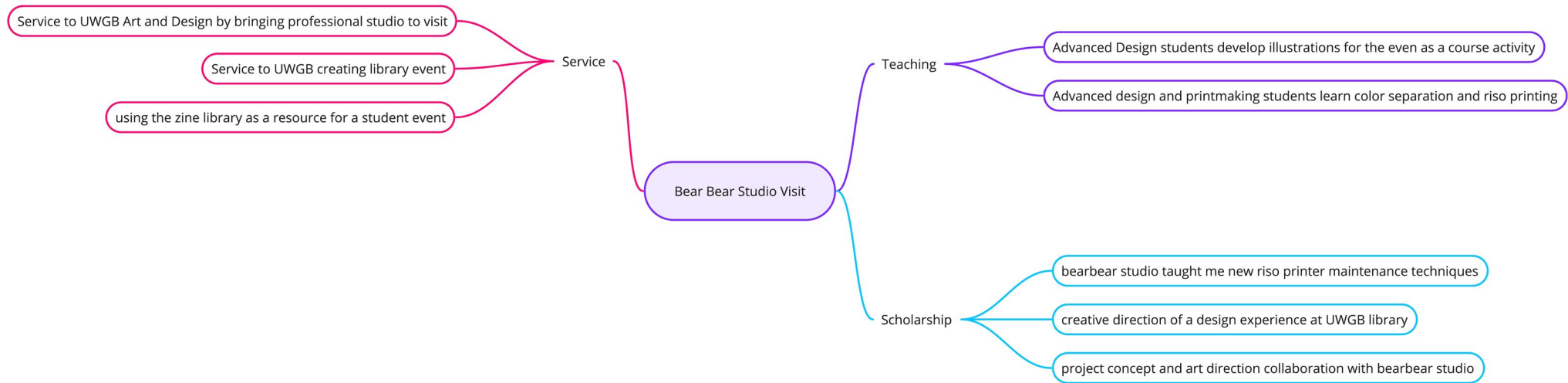
Narrative and Professional Activities August 2022-February 2024
University of WI, Green Bay

Making as research, a holistic view



Preface

As a preface to the required narrative that categorizes my work as teaching, research and service, I would like to offer a holistic perspective of how these items overlap and intertwine within a collaborative design project.



Teaching

Technology and Contemporary Design Practice

Teaching at UWGB was my return to the in-person classroom after teaching design online during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to teaching online during the pandemic, I also held remote design positions – one for an art museum and one for a large healthcare company. These experiences significantly influenced my current approach to teaching design in a hybrid modality.

In my courses, students use miro, a professional design and project management software as a virtual critique space. It allows me and the students to track the design process from beginning to end and aligns with the working process in the professional design field. Students can view multiple versions of theirs and each other's work, can work in teams, can offer feedback via typing or drawing, and use other creative and graphic tools to express ideas visually. Pairing this online classroom space and remote instructional materials on Canvas with an in-person studio, I offer students flexibility with one course session in person and one online asynchronously.

I communicate with my students in the language they are learning. I created a [syllabus website](#) my first semester, and often show illustrations, grids, and diagrams. I use visual metaphors and memes to express concepts and ideas. We have discussed the ethical use of AI in graphic design and used an image generator in an exploratory digital drawing assignment.

Fall 22

Design 332 Design Studio II – 12 students

Design 431 Design Studio III – 14 students

Spring 23

Design 231 Studio 1 – 11 students
Design 332 Design Studio II – 14 students
Design 431 Design Studio III – 13 students
1 Teaching Assistantship

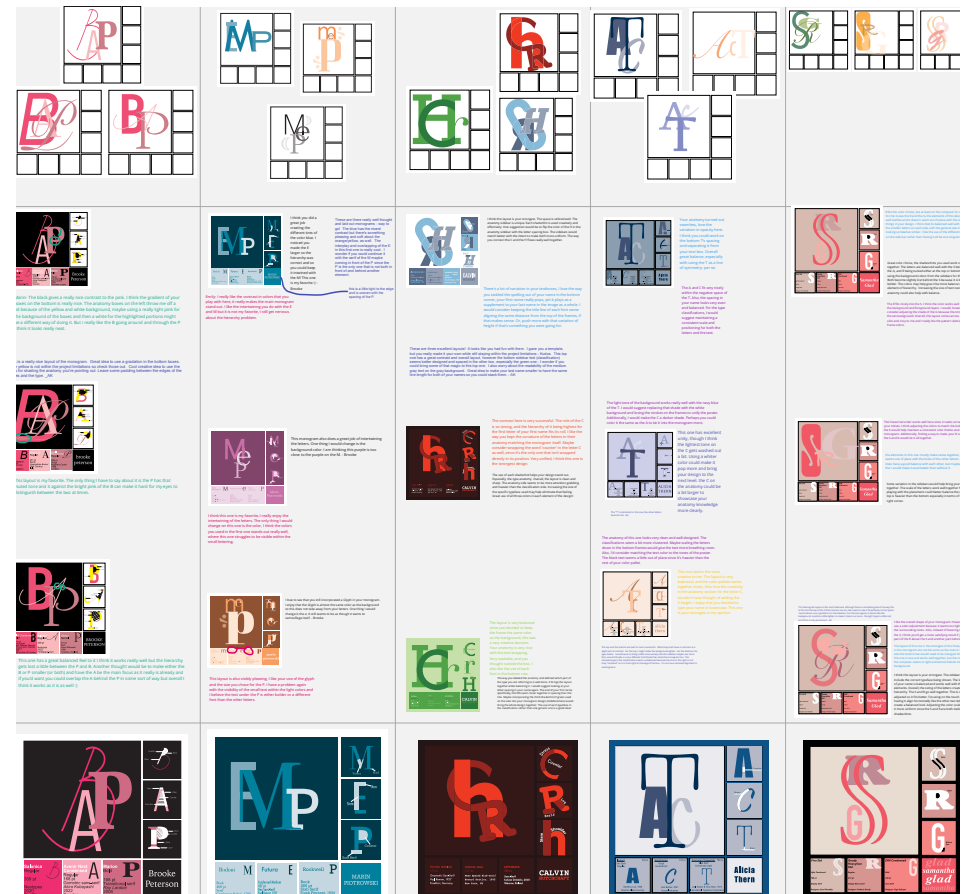
1 Independent Study

Supervising 1 design assistant
Advised 1 senior project

Fall 23

Design 332 Studio 2 – 16 students
Design 431 Studio 3 – 13 students
Design 433 Advanced Design
Digital Illustration and Surface Design – 13 students

1 Teaching Assistantship
Supervising 2 design assistants



Tracking progress and critiques on Miro

Spring 24

Design 332 Studio 2 – 12 students
Design 431 Studio 3 – 11 students
Design 433 Advanced Design
Professional Practice Capstone – 16 students
Adivising 2 senior projects
1 Teaching Assistantship

Course Development

I contributed to an updated curriculum in the design studios and developed new courses to address gaps in student skills and success. My wide range of teaching experience (a community college, a four-year art school, and both the college of liberal arts and the college of design at an R1 University), observations from teaching design studios 1-3 during my first year at UWGB, and collaboration with UWGB graphic design colleagues, informed the development of a curriculum that offers a robust study of graphic design essentials while also allowing scholarly design exploration with the addition of a capstone project.

Typography

There was no typography course here at UWGB. Typographic knowledge separates a professional designer from someone who is just playing around with desktop publishing. I taught typography and advanced Typography at the University of Minnesota (U of MN) College of Design and adapted my materials for a course at UWGB. This course includes an ongoing partnership with the Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum.

Professional Practice Capstone

This course gives students the opportunity to develop a self-directed capstone project that incorporates design research, and to put together a portfolio that shows their unique personality and style. I taught both a portfolio course and a senior exhibition course at the U of MN College of Design and have adapted and combined materials from those.

Digital Illustration and Surface Design

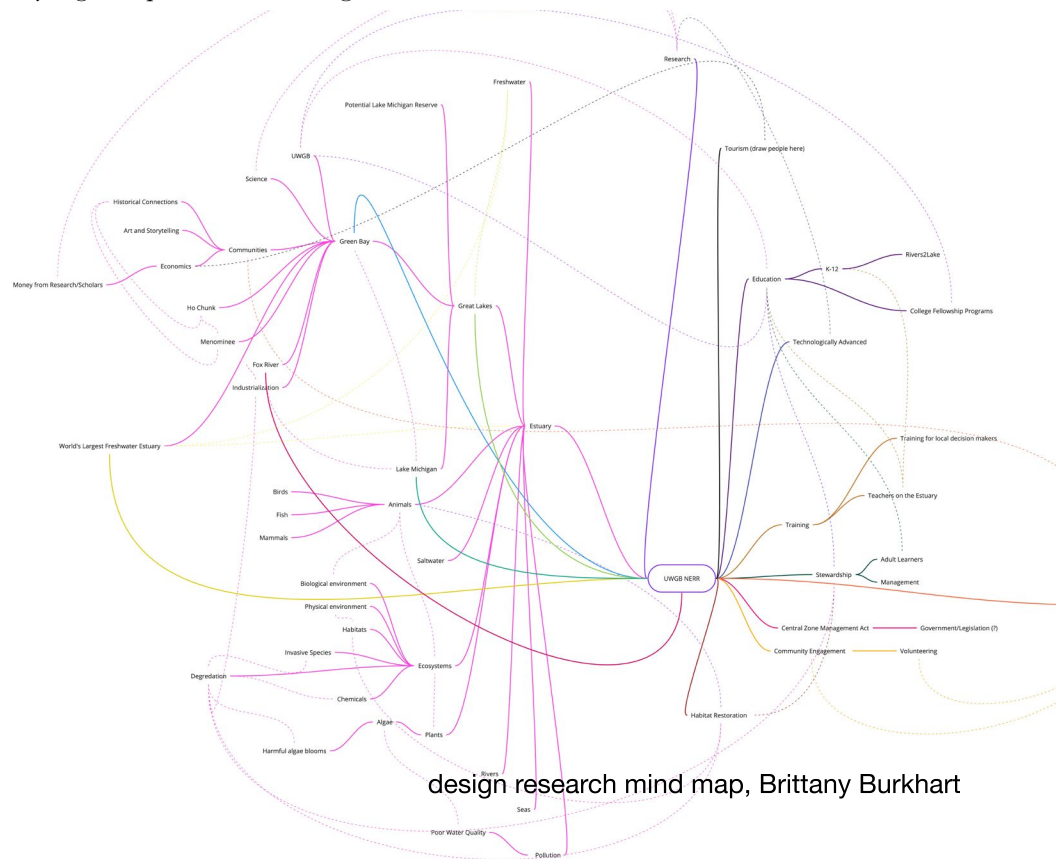
Digital drawing is another area of skill that needed focus for UWGB design students. Surface design, packaging design, and illustration are large sectors in the professional design industry that deserve more time and attention in a graphic design course of study. Using UWGBs ipads, students got a taste of drawing on an Ipad pro with an Apple Pencil in this course.

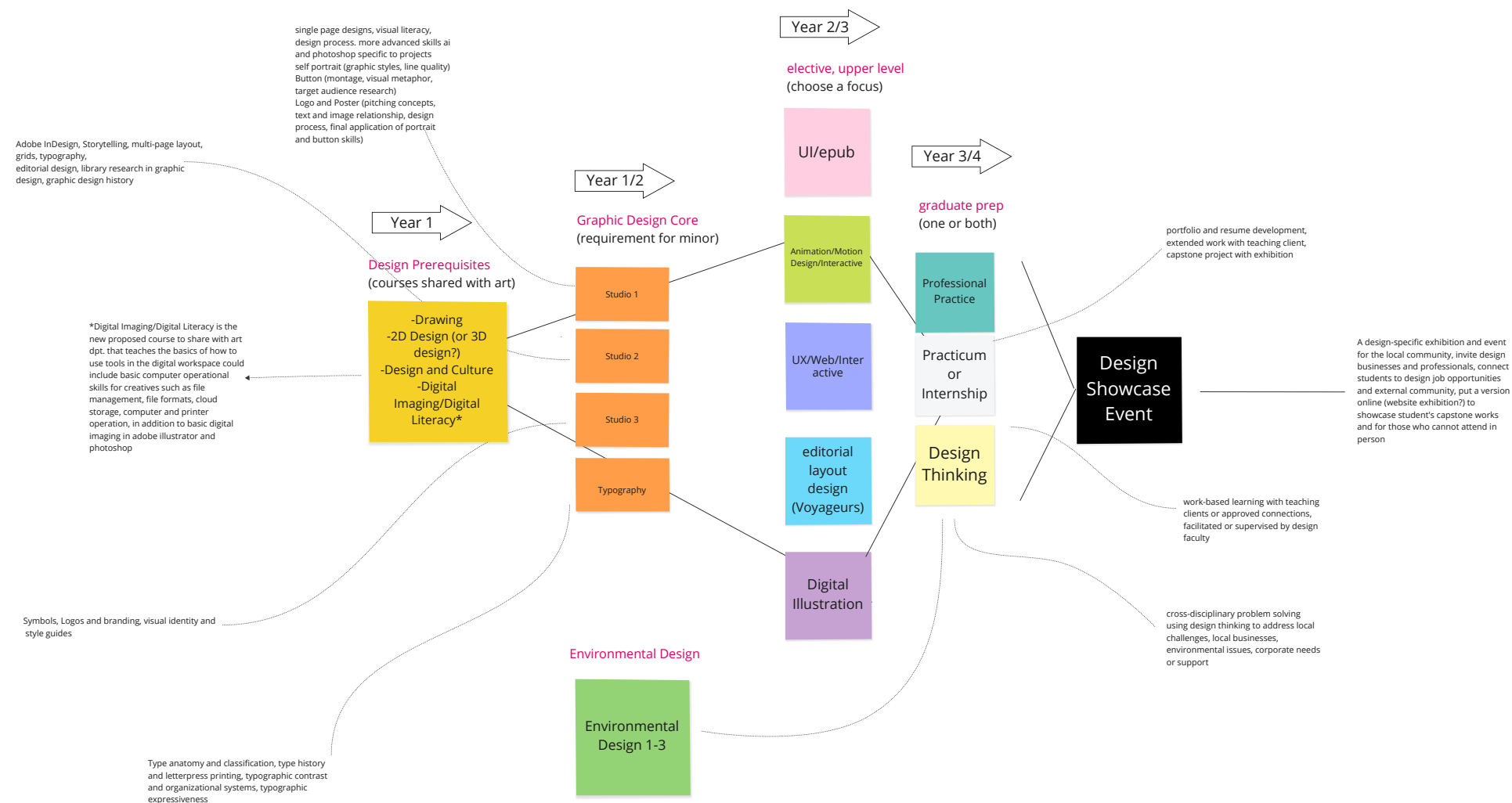
I advised on purchases of design books for the UWGB library, specifically relating to typography, design research and professional practice.

Infusing Design Research

In each studio, I introduce a unique way of conducting and communicating design research. Students use the library to research the design cannon and create a visual, verbal, and oral report on an influential designer. Students work with a “teaching client,” and gain experience with market research, design briefs, and the iterative process of visual research. When creating graphics for the Bay of Green Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, I collaborated with the **Cofrin Center for Biodiversity** to take students on a hike at (UWGB managed) Point Au Sable along with Bobbi Webster, the Natural Resources Manager on campus, so that they could physically experience the estuary they were working to communicate via graphic design. And students learn how to work with a collection as inspiration with archival research at the UWGB archive. I have plans to add conversational and interview-based research and forms of data visualization to this series. These formative research experiences culminate in a summative, self-directed design capstone project with a design research component.

Some of this design research can be seen in [designer zines](#) and visual identity style guide presentation assignments.





Design Studio Classroom

I received lab modernization funds in 2023 to improve the lighting in studio arts 312-314. Appropriate lighting is essential for visual work, so I researched indirect light fixtures and full spectrum bulbs and collaborated with electricians from the UWGB facilities to develop a lighting design that maximizes lighting possibilities in the much-used design studio classroom.

The graphic design major uses just one classroom for all its studio courses and many students have required studios that add up to 6 or more hours a day in a classroom with no windows. The classroom now has full spectrum, indirect day-lighting which mimics the sun. This lighting is scientifically proven to improve mood and performance and allows for a better view of colors in printed designs. The zone lighting can be switched on or off depending on the amount of light desired and how the space is being used. Additional lighting was also added to the critique area so more works or larger-scale work can be hung and viewed in that space.

In a separate space adjacent to the design studio on the 3rd floor, I set up a small computer lab and print production area that serves multiple purposes:

Additional workspace while classes are in session in the graphic design computer lab.

The lab is booked almost solid with the full roster of design courses leaving students little time to work on homework outside class time or later on evenings and weekends. Having this additional space allows flexibility for students who either do not have their own laptop to work on, or who may not be able to come to the lab on evenings or weekends.

A designated space for using large format printers or other digital fabrication (future fab lab).

Moving printers to this space allows students time and flexibility for printing their projects without interrupting the fully booked graphic design computer lab. It also creates a position for an upper-level student as a design assistant who can staff the lab and help students with printing or design questions. Additionally, it lays the groundwork for a future digital fabrication space within art and design.

Photo: 2-color riso prints of digital valentine illustrations, bearbear studio visiting artist workshop

Visiting Designers and Workshops

In February of 2024, I invited bearbear studio to visit UWGB and collaborate as visiting designers. One aspect of the visit was an educational workshop for advanced design and printmaking students. The workshop demonstrated color separation in a digital illustration and printing those separations in layers on the Riso printer. Additionally, Hamilton Wood Type and Printing Museum will be visiting in March for a letterpress workshop that will teach design students the history of their craft. The Hamilton workshop will be an ongoing partnership with the new typography course.



Set up design studio classroom

- Self-instruction on technology in design studio classroom – learning and troubleshooting display screens and computers
- Learned printers and getting them running: installing drivers, testing papers, troubleshooting
- Requested appropriate adapters so newer macbooks

can connect to printers and projection tech.

- Allocated flat files for design space and coordinated their placement.
- Collaborated on configuring ipads for digital drawing in Adobe Fresco
- Established riso printing capability

Teaching Process and Reflection & Using These to Evaluate Teaching

My pedagogical focus is teaching the design process. I accomplish this through project-based work with defined phases or checkpoints. The process has stricter parameters early in study, which eventually loosen, allowing students to develop and define their own processes. The more advanced the student, the less I become involved in the process. I teach students the essential professional skills of defining a goal, problem, or question and then tracking and communicating the steps taken to arrive at a solution. I acknowledge that (good) design ideas are emergent, and finding a design solution is not a linear, step-by-step process. I emphasize grit as a determining factor of success.

Many assignments include a final reflection that asks students to think through their process and evaluate their own work and their level of grit. The reflections are based on the *studio habits of mind framework from the Harvard School of Education* but adapted for “design habits of mind.” Being reflective helps students verbalize their design decisions and define their own creative process. Questioning what students enjoyed and how they overcame challenges in their project allows them to access their emotions around design work. The same questions allow me to both get to know them better as individuals and to evaluate their growth when I compare their responses to first day of class questionnaires.

Student reflections on studio 2 monogram typography assignment

“By making this poster, I now understand how the shapes of letters can work together to create a design, rather than just putting letters on a screen together. I also am much more aware of the distinct shapes that make up each letter.”
“One challenge was definitely not getting too attached to a design because there’s always ways to improve a design from your initial ideas.”

“I now understand that typography allows you to have the creative freedom to use letters in a non-conventional way. People can create really unique, interesting designs just by combining letters and utilizing glyphs. There really are endless amounts of designs you can create through combining, overlapping, and applying opacity to letters.”

“Playing around with different fonts and letters has given me a better

understanding of how they relate to each other, and I now have a greater understanding for the anatomy of letterforms.”

Student reflections on studio 3 branding and identity process

“This project taught me to slow down when I’m brainstorming. It is difficult to not get “stuck” on one logo idea. It is okay to make changes and sometimes start over.”

1. Cultures influence designs.
2. Time & research are key.
3. It is okay to go back and rework. It’s not failure, just design process.
4. Always orient around the brand identity.”

“I learned quite a bit about brand identity design from this project, now I understand just how much work it is and how specific it needs to be. From the logo design aspect I relearned (as I’m apt to do) that criticisms and suggestions are important as always, it’s fantastic to learn what other people think and to hear their ideas, even if I don’t end up using them myself; they always seem to better my design regardless of whether I use them directly or not.”

“Being inclusive with my logo posed a challenge when it came to skin color...Our class critiques helped me, and in the end I chose to leave the skin paper white, as though

it’s a coloring book to be filled in with whatever someone wants to imagine.”

“I learned a lot about how time consuming the process can be and I learned to really trust myself when designing a lot more than I did before. I really learned the phrase “trust the process.”

“I learned that this process takes time and cannot be rushed. During this time, I challenged my initial thought processes and learned how to push boundaries.”

“I expanded my knowledge of the steps it took to create a logo, logomark, and logotype. I learned about visual identity and how to create it. I learned more about branding and how to properly represent a brand within their visual identity. And I then learned how to take all of this knowledge and wrap it up nicely in a style guide for the client.”

Service

Design in Service of the University

My service (the past three semesters) has focused on contributing expertise on the visual communication of complex ideas, presenting UWGB as a place with a strong art and design culture and helping grow community around visual literacy and culture.

2022-24

National estuarine research reserve (NERR) collaboration

Emily Tyner, UWGB's Director of Freshwater Strategy has been a "teaching client" for my studio 3 class for the past three semesters. The classes have been working to develop graphics for the promotion and communication of the NERR in the Bay of Green Bay. In the class I mentor students on a semester-long branding and identity project focused on the NERR. Emily and her supervisor Matt Dornbush have been excited and grateful for this collaboration. They have commented that seeing the students' designs makes it feel real, helps to visualize what could be, and can even be helpful in the designation process.

MARCH 2024

Women's History Month

I am working on a poster series featuring anonymous responses from UWGB women about ideas they may be hesitant to share or things they feel they can't say at work. The goal is to elevate women voiced and ideas and offer a different platform (using graphic design) for sharing thoughts and ideas. This will take the form of a poster installation on campus to celebrate Women's History Month.

FEBRUARY 2024

Riso Love library event creative direction

I collaborated with Renee Ettinger and Stephanie Alvey to design an event at the UWGB library that introduced students to Riso printing and fostered community through the creation of anonymous valentines. The event made use of the zine library established by Professor Sarah Detweiller.

SPRING 2024

A2 zine

I am advising the A2 zine club and their production of a Riso-printed zine about gun violence.

OCTOBER 2023

2nd year series lecture at UWGB

I presented my teaching, research, and scholarship to the CAHSS Dean and UWGB professors. This took the form of a visual model and presentation about making as a form of research.

OCTOBER 2023

National Design Week celebration

Along with two students, I created a National Design Week celebration on campus, mirroring the design week celebration held by the Cooper Hewitt Museum, the Smithsonian's design museum. We created a social media campaign about design week, made design week stickers and buttons, and held a film screening of *Graphic Means* at the Christie Theatre. The screening event was supported by UWGB student events.

FALL 2023

Art and design promotional button designs

I created simple designs for button-

making to promote the art and design department at a high school theatre fest in.

JULY 2023

ArtFest

I represented UWGB at Green Bay's downtown Artfest and promoted the graphic design program with a free button-making activity.

FEBRUARY 2023

ArtiGras festival judge

FALL 2022 - CURRENT

UWGB Design website redesign

Contributed editing, writing, and to the design program web page re-design. Coordinated photo and video documentation for webpage photos.

ONGOING

UWGB design Instagram

I use social media to promote the program and its events, highlight student work, contribute to conversations and content about design.

Creative Scholarship

I continue to explore the creative process as it occurs in the digital-physical continuum inherent to graphic design. My creative production has been focused on collaborative design projects that connect to, stem from, and work to make sense of the physical and cultural spaces I occupy, including the UWGB campus. The term “auto ethnographic design” was coined by scholars Louise Schouwenberg and Michael Kaethler to describe this approach.

In **2023, I RECEIVED A PLATINUM MARCOM AWARD** for event graphics and ephemera designs for the Life Sciences Leaders Forum held by Optum Health. These designs included a typographic participatory Lego wall and accompanying custom slider box kit of Legos, swag, and way finding. I continue to use my skills in design direction, editorial and communication design, print design, typography, identity and branding, bookmaking, and exhibition graphics to craft contextual and responsive designs. And I stay in touch with innovations, design education, and thought leadership in design through the AIGA, and on social media. I virtually attended the AIGA national design conference in October, 2022.

Risography Research and Training

During my first semester at UWGB, I spearheaded the purchase of a riso printer. Since riso machines are specialty printers from Japan, the process was took detailed technical research on riso printer models, their inks and components, as well as communication with vendors and navigating a bidding process. UWGB now has the first and only Riso printer in Northeast Wisconsin and has printed works by our professors and students. Risography is especially useful for teaching color theory and separation in the print design process and is more environmentally friendly than laser printing since it is soy-based inks do not contain plastic. To aid in managing the UWGB riso studio, I received riso training at bearbear studio, a professional riso studio in Milwaukee, WI. I maintain a professional relationship with bearbear and received more training in riso techniques and maintenance when they visited UWGB this past February.

BearBear studio visited UWGB in February 2024 for a design-print collaboration. We began our collaboration in Fall of 2023 and together developed a design-print project which included advanced design students. The result of the collaboration between myself, bearbear studio, and the students, was a collection of Riso printed valentines that became the centerpiece of a student event at the UWGB library. The goal was for art and design students to take part in a project that brought design and riso printing to the campus community

“The auto-ethnographic turn unites design as both an expressive act and a type of research process... as a practice that blends formal experimentation, critical dialogue, and the social sciences to create a critical lens through which to explore the increasingly complex world.”

Jarrett Fuller (2024) The Auto-Ethnographic Turn in Design, Design and Culture, 16:1, 109-112, DOI: 10.1080/17547075.2022.2061138)

Risograph Work

SPRING 2023

Research Enhancement Grant Botanicals

I received a Research Enhancement Grant in 2023 to purchase additional ink drums and ink colors for the riso printer, to enable my creation of riso prints inspired by the plants of the Bay of Green Bay estuary. ***This project makes use of the UWGB herbarium in collaboration with curator Keir Wefferling.***

JULY 2023

ArtFest

I collaborated with alumnus, Osvaldo Lopez on a series of Riso-printed button designs. The buttons promoted UWGB Art and Design, were part of a button-making station at the Green Bay Artfest in July 2023, and were ***supported by downtown Green Bay.***

MARCH 2024

Womens History Month

I will be using the Riso printer to create guerilla art inspired posters that feature text from an anonymous survey of UWGB women. ***This project is supported by the Dean's office and will be displayed around campus in March.***

DECEMBER 2024

UWGB Archive Calendar

In December 2023 my students and I made a Green Bay-themed, Riso-printed calendar using the UWGB archive as inspiration. I created the cover of the calendar. We did an unofficial sale of the calendar to raise funds to support a visit from bearbear studio.

Bay of Green Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR)

I have been collaborating with Emily Tyner, UWGBs director of freshwater strategy, since January of 2023 working on visual representations of the NERR.

2023-4 Graphic Design Research Presentation

I developed a presentation of the research process I led students through while working on the NERR identity and along with my students, gave this presentation to Emily and Matt Dornbush, the Dean of the College of Business.

Book (forthcoming Spring '25)

Emily and I are developing a book to house the many different projects and collaborations happening with the NERR. I will be heading up the creative direction of the book to be released when the NERR is officially designated.

