

Area of Interest: Arts and Design

## Interdisciplinary Studies in Human-Centred Design (Co-op and Non Co-op Version)

Ontario College Graduate Certificate  
1 Year  
Ottawa Campus

Program Code: 1420X03FWO

### Our Program

**Research human behaviour and design meaningful experiences in our industry-focused postgraduate certificate with co-op option.**

This Ontario College Graduate Certificate program prepares students for a career in design research and strategy. Professionals in this field examine the intersection of ethnographic research, experience design, emerging technology and business requirements to create evidence-based strategies that direct the development of systems and services. Working directly with businesses, governments and not-for-profit organizations, students examine complex human-centred problems. Real-world projects leverage design theory, research methods, and participatory design activities to define a problem space and model proposed interventions.

Students also have the option to gain real-world experience through a paid co-operative education (co-op) work term (see Additional Information for more details). Please note that placement in the co-op work term is subject to availability and academic eligibility. **Admission to the co-op program does not guarantee a co-op placement.**

Graduates may find employment in a wide range of sectors including:

- government and public services
- advanced technology strategy
- humanitarian development and aid
- financial services and banking
- healthcare and medical services
- human resources and management
- business strategy and development

### SUCCESS FACTORS

This program is well-suited for students who:

- Like the challenge of untangling complex problems.
- Enjoy trying new things and are not afraid to learn from failure.
- Possess excellent interpersonal and human relations skills.
- Value and respect the ideas, perspectives and expertise of others.
- Have a keen attention to detail and process.

### Employment

Graduates may find entry-level employment as a user experience (UX) researcher; UX strategist;

UX manager; customer experience (CX) researcher; CX strategist; usability analyst; accessibility analyst; systems analyst; service designer; data analyst; data visualization specialist; information architect; communication strategist; content strategist; and UX writer.

## Learning Outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

- Apply a universal, interdisciplinary design approach to overcome complex problems and create intelligent solutions that address social, technological and economic challenges.
- Manage a holistic, human-centred process to deliver design strategies, products, systems and services for government, corporations and non-profit organizations.
- Design collaboratively in an interdisciplinary studio environment to produce communication, products, systems and service projects for a variety of media.
- Apply primary and secondary research methodologies to the design process using a think/make practice model to achieve project outcomes that meet user needs and adhere to industry standards.
- Adhere to the professional practices of a design studio to facilitate and manage the success of design teams in achieving project goals.
- Participate in an iterative, multi-phase design process in order to create testable prototypes and realized products.
- Liaise and negotiate project direction and process with stakeholders to produce strategies and outcomes that align with business objectives.
- Present and defend research results and design outcomes to a diverse audience using effective communication strategies.
- Identify and apply discipline-specific practices that contribute to the local and global community through social responsibility, economic commitment and environmental stewardship.

## Program of Study

Level: 01	Courses	Hours
DSN8010	Design Theory I	42.0
DSN8011	User Experience Research 1	42.0
DSN8012	Visualization 1	42.0
DSN8014	Industry Project 1	140.0
DSN8016	Professional Development I	42.0
GEP1001	Cooperative Education and Job Readiness	21.0
Level: 02	Courses	Hours
DSN8020	Design Theory II	42.0
DSN8021	User Experience Research 2	42.0
DSN8023	Industry Project II	140.0
DSN8024	Visualization II	42.0
DSN8025	Professional Development 2	42.0

Co-op: 01	Courses	Hours
WKT8020	Interdisciplinary Studies in Human- Centred Design Co-Operative Work Term	

## Fees for the 2024/2025 Academic Year

Tuition and related ancillary fees for this program can be viewed by using the Tuition and Fees Estimator tool at <https://www.algonquincollege.com/fee-estimator> .

Further information on fees can be found by visiting the Registrar's Office website at <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro> .

Fees are subject to change.

## Admission Requirements for the 2025/2026 Academic Year

### Program Eligibility

- Ontario College Diploma, Ontario College Advanced Diploma or degree or equivalent.
- Submission of a portfolio. Submission details can be found on the Algonquin College Additional Admission Requirements website: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/admissionspackages> .
- Applicants with international transcripts must provide proof of the subject-specific requirements noted above and may be required to provide proof of language proficiency. Domestic applicants with international transcripts must be evaluated through the International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (ICAS) or World Education Services (WES).
- IELTS-International English Language Testing Service (Academic) Overall band of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each band; OR TOEFL-Internet-based (iBT)-overall 88, with a minimum of 22 in each component: Reading 22; Listening 22; Speaking 22; Writing 22; OR Duolingo English Test (DET) Overall 120, minimum of 120 in Literacy and no score below 105.

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## Application Information

### INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES IN HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN (CO-OP AND NON CO-OP VERSION) Program Code 1420X03FWO

Applications to full-time day programs must be submitted with official transcripts showing completion of the academic admission requirements through:

ontariocolleges.ca  
60 Corporate Court  
Guelph, Ontario N1G 5J3  
1-888-892-2228

Applications are available online at <https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/>.

Applications for Fall Term and Winter Term admission received by February 1 will be given equal consideration. Applications received after February 1 will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis as long as places are available.

International applicants applying from out-of-country can obtain the International Student Application Form at <https://algonquincollege.force.com/myACint/> or by contacting the Registrar's Office.

For further information on the admissions process, contact:

Registrar's Office  
Algonquin College  
1385 Woodroffe Ave  
Ottawa, ON K2G 1V8  
Telephone: 613-727-0002  
Toll-free: 1-800-565-4723  
TTY: 613-727-7766  
Fax: 613-727-7632  
Contact: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro>

## **Additional Information**

### **CO-OP INFORMATION:**

All applicants apply directly to the co-op version of this program through <https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/> or our International Application Portal. Applicants not wishing to pursue the co-op version will have the opportunity to opt-out after being admitted to the program but prior to the first co-op work term.

Co-operative education (Co-op) allows students to integrate their classroom learning with a real-world experience through paid work terms. Two academic terms prior to the cooperative education work term, students are required to actively participate in and successfully complete the self-directed co-op course, readiness activities and workshops.

Students must actively conduct a guided, self-directed job search and are responsible for securing approved program-related paid co-op employment. Students compete for co-op positions alongside students from Algonquin College and other Canadian and international colleges and universities. Algonquin College's Co-op Department provides assistance in developing co-op job opportunities and guides the overall process, but does not guarantee that a student will obtain employment in a co-op work term. Co-op students may be required to relocate to take part in the co-op employment opportunities available in their industry and must cover all associated expenses; e.g., travel, work permits, visa applications, accommodation and all other incurred expenses.

Co-op work terms are typically 14 weeks in duration and are completed during a term when students are not taking courses. For more information on your program's co-op level(s), visit the courses tab on your program's webpage.

International students enrolled in a co-op program are required by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) to have a valid Co-op/Internship Work Permit prior to commencing their work term. Without this document International students are not legally eligible to engage in work in Canada that is part of an academic program. The Co-op/Internship Work Permit does not authorize international students to work outside the requirements of their academic program.

For more information on co-op programs, the co-op work/study schedule, as well as general and program-specific co-op eligibility criteria, please visit <https://www.algonquincollege.com/coop>.

Successful completion of all courses, including the mandatory cooperative education (Co-op) Work Term(s) is a requirement for graduation.

## **Contact Information**

### **Program Coordinator(s)**

- Jed Looker, <mailto:lookerj@algonquincollege.com> , 613-727-4723

## **Course Descriptions**

### **DSN8010 Design Theory I**

Design history and theory provide design practitioners the theoretical frameworks and conceptual foundations to position and validate design strategies and outcomes. Students examine, compare and contrast interdisciplinary design issues and human-centred design themes. Referencing academic and professional literature, students structure and defend arguments to create papers to support ideas in writing.

Prerequisite(s): none  
Corerequisite(s):none

### **DSN8011 User Experience Research 1**

Design research is critical to identifying human needs and evaluating project outcomes. Students apply human-centred methodologies and workflows to plan, ideate, and test systems and services. Through collaborative activities, students investigate the problem space, arrive at a research approach, then plan and execute on those research methodologies with support and engagement from their stakeholders.

Prerequisite(s): none  
Corerequisite(s):none

### **DSN8012 Visualization 1**

Designers require strong visual storytelling skills to explore concepts with their team, key stakeholders and user groups. Students learn visualization techniques and principles to develop data-driven artifacts for critical analysis and distribution. No previous design knowledge or skill is required.

Prerequisite(s): none  
Corerequisite(s):none

### **DSN8014 Industry Project 1**

Industry has a need for professionals who can ideate solutions for complex human-centred problems. Working with various industry partners, students take an interdisciplinary and participatory design approach to developing strategic design interventions that address real-world problems. Learning activities are studio based and under the mentorship of a design practitioner.

Prerequisite(s): none  
Corerequisite(s):none

### **DSN8016 Professional Development I**

Effective leadership and management of scalable design teams is critical to project success. Students appraise multidisciplinary collaborative processes, workflows and techniques to direct and evaluate team output and performance and to manage project expectations and deliverables with clients and stakeholders. Writing and public speaking skills provide students a platform for networking with the professional community and discovering opportunities in industry.

Prerequisite(s): none  
Corerequisite(s):none

### **DSN8020 Design Theory II**

Academic and professional literature provides context for the strategies and concepts developed in a major project. Special attention is given to literature with findings that align design

interventions with business and technology themes. Students discuss human psychology and behaviour to identify user needs and frustrations and frame the appropriate strategy and solution.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

### **DSN8021 User Experience Research 2**

Students plan, ideate, and test industry projects by applying human-centred methodologies and workflows. Data collected from primary and secondary research informs project strategy, scope and implementation. Students work closely with industry partners and stakeholders to design strategies for systems and services.

Prerequisite(s): DSN8011

Corerequisite(s):none

### **DSN8023 Industry Project II**

Working with industry partners, student teams apply an interdisciplinary and human-centred design approach to research and develop product strategies and deliverables. Under the mentorship of a design practitioner, students apply knowledge and skills to provide solutions for a real-world problem. Teams work collaboratively to manage project processes and deliverables, as well as the coordination of external stakeholders and resources.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

### **DSN8024 Visualization II**

Research findings are situated within the broader context of scaled processes and interdependencies. Design strategies inform the development of visualizations that support stakeholder critique and user testing. To showcase their industry projects, students design an exhibit for a themed grad show.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

### **DSN8025 Professional Development 2**

Design and business strategy are interwoven. Through market analysis, case studies and discussion with industry guest speakers, students align project strategies and outcomes with business objectives. Students manage client expectations and measure the effectiveness of project processes and outcomes.

Prerequisite(s): DSN8016

Corerequisite(s):none

### **GEP1001 Cooperative Education and Job Readiness**

Students are guided through a series of activities that prepare them to conduct a professional job search and succeed in the workplace. Through a detailed orientation students learn the cooperative education program policies and procedures related to searching and securing a work term opportunity. Students identify their strengths and transferable skills and participate in workshop-style sessions that focus on cover letter and resume development, interview techniques and job search strategies. Students learn how to navigate a web-based resource centre, which is used to post employment and cooperative education job opportunities. Students reflect on workplace success, ethics and responsibilities.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none

### **WKT8020 Interdisciplinary Studies in Human- Centred Design Co-Operative Work Term**

This optional co-op placement provides students with experiential opportunities within the field. Students gain entry-level positions that involve a variety of activities allowing application of principles and concepts developed during previous study.

Prerequisite(s): none

Corerequisite(s):none