

During the bachelor of Industrial Design here in Eindhoven, we are educated to become designers with a strong base of skills and knowledge in all areas of expertise. Practice however taught me that quickly into the bachelor you find certain strengths and weaknesses that shape your identity which influences the choices you make for the remainder of the bachelor. As a result I found myself making choices based on interest and strengths, finding opportunities that supported my development in these strengths. While this is not a bad thing, and I certainly do not regret making these choices, I do however feel like after finishing the bachelor I have not discovered all fields to design, whether they supported my identity or not.

I am educating and challenging myself to become a service / consultancy designer. My strengths lie in the communication and managing of a design process, taking different stakeholders, perspectives and users into account and aiming for optimal user experiences. Within this, user interfaces, research into them and the expression of them play a large role. While I have developed a solid skillset to do this with, I still saw an opportunity to expand this. My main approach in communicating has always been visual, and has lately been expanding to tangible as well. This is where I saw an opportunity to improve my base of skills and knowledge I was talking about before, while being able to tailor these new skills to my strengths and interests.

One of my learning goals going into this course was learning about different possibilities and applications for user interfaces, and how to evaluate them. By having this goal, I want to challenge myself to start using different methods besides visuals to communicate and explore UI's in the design process. Up until now I have found it very relevant how we have been learning about how to find emerging technologies for UI's and how to apply these to various societal challenges. A benefit of learning to do it this way and not the other way around starting with a societal challenge, is that I will be able to use emerging technologies as inspiration for UI's as well instead of being bound to the societal context already.

I have found that the balance between theory, tutorials and hands-on exercises work well for me and expand my skill set. By reading various HCI papers, narrowing down the key elements of them and assessing the implications of each technology, I have learned about different fields of technologies for UI's and possible application areas. These insights in combination with the hands-on exercises have given me a better understanding of how I can apply this in the future to my own design processes as well and opportunities when designing interfaces.

While i am not a strong technology designer with skills in building electronics and coding, the tutorials have provided me with a solid base to be able to design with the toolkits we're provided with during the lab sessions. The hands-on lab exercises allow me to build a solid basic technology and provide me with the confidence to start exploring the technology and finding new applications for it. This way I am able to design for part of my vision, since a goal for me is keeping the new technologies on the market or technologies that are emerging relevant and usable for users and society.

I look forward to the second half of the course, as we will be able to apply our more theoretical knowledge from the first half in an actual case and design with an emerging technology. I do foresee an extra challenge in realizing a working prototype and evaluating

this with users due to the covid restrictions that last until well after the christmas break. The first half of the course still allowed us to physically work together on building the prototypes, which I think was of great value in exploring the new technologies and learning how to tailor it to specific societal challenges, but this will become a lot more challenging upcoming weeks.

The collaboration with my group members has started out more rough than what I've been used to with other groups. I can notice a difference in the way of thinking and work attitude, them both not having done the bachelor Industrial Design here in Eindhoven. The sometimes missing proactive attitude and initiative has caused me to lose some motivation for the course in the process of defining an idea for the midterm report, since I felt solely responsible for coming up with an idea and trying to engage my group members in the discussion to develop an interesting concept. The fact that the first weeks of the course were more directed towards the individual assignments might have also played a role in this. Luckily we were able to define an interesting concept and societal application to work on in the upcoming weeks, which gave me back some confidence and motivation for the course.

For the last weeks of the course I aim to learn more about evaluating and validating the application of emergent technologies to societal contexts and how these impact society and users. I feel like it will be challenging to find a balance between executing an evaluation and managing expectations on this evaluation with the covid restrictions, especially since we all know how an evaluation normally could provide proper results. However, I feel like this challenge will also spark creativity and allow us to develop new methods of evaluating and justifying our design.