

Drexel Custom Designed Vision Statement and Plan of Study

"Global Problem Solving Strategies"

Since I was a kid, and to this day, I have purposefully, exhaustively, and often at great personal expense, worked to not be labeled or pigeon holed. I am exhilarated by diversity of experience, thought, and people. This is what has driven me to seek deep competency in theater, debate, math, science, research and leadership. At every turn, I have carefully cultivated and preserved a wide angle view of the world because it stimulates my mind, reveals opportunities that others do not see, and inspires me to create non-traditional solutions.

While searching for the college I would spend the next 4 or 5 years at, I started to wonder if college was really for me. This wasn't because I wasn't interested in the further pursuit of knowledge, as I have a voracious curiosity, but rather, every time I tried to envision my path I was constantly met with a requirement to narrow, choose, and abandon the interdisciplinary way I chose to move through the world. Nothing felt 100% right. Every choice I made felt like it was coming up short in some regard, and it forced me to consider educational work-arounds to suit my needs.

I'm going to solve globally relevant problems through entrepreneurship, but no major or specific curriculum gave me what I saw as the toolbox of skills and knowledge I would need to be able to identify, design, and produce solutions.

Until the door for the Custom Design Major at Drexel opened for me.

That was when all the pieces fell into place and I suddenly felt at ease. I could see a path that not only got me, but actually advocated for my worldview, and would partner with me to make it happen. This is why I need this program.

I want to solve problems that drastically impact the world. The way to do that, for me, is through entrepreneurship. However, entrepreneurship is different for everyone. Obviously, the term applies to those who start a business, but the entrepreneurial mindset and the toolbox of skills entrepreneurs have are so diverse that drawing similarities between successful entrepreneurs is hard to do. For example, Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos, Emily Weiss, and Steve Jobs are all entirely different people with entirely different skill sets. Bezos was a financial wizard who's wife loved books. Musk is a fiery physicist. Weiss was a fashion blogger with no business administration experience. Jobs was a fanatical design nut. How did these incredibly successful problem solvers disrupt not only their industries, but the world?

I realized that it was not their formal training and expertise that helped them rise up, instead it was their comfort with breaking away from that formal training to ideate without preconceived constraints. They had the intellect, drive, and confidence to not be trapped by their "trained-in expertise". Rather, they pushed past their boundaries to look at the world through different lenses.

These change makers utilized diverse skill sets to navigate new opportunities and solve problems that impacted everyone. They did not train to be entrepreneurs, they became entrepreneurs.

The world is changing at an incredible pace that has never been seen before in the history of humanity and it is almost guaranteed that that rate of change will only increase. With that being the case, the question becomes, how can I prepare myself for a world that no one can fully see or understand?

It starts, for me, by painting a picture of what a versatile entrepreneur will look like in the future.

First off, the future entrepreneur will have a natural rebel mentality and talent. As Harvard Professor Francesca Gino discusses in her book, *Rebel Talent*, the people who are best able to create change in society never feel complacent with the state of their surroundings and society in general. They are willing, and often do, break social rules to bring innovative solutions to the table. A lot of the mentalities of rebel talent can be fostered. Drexel's Custom Design Major is the perfect environment for fostering this type of mindset. Being surrounded by other curious, non-traditional learners that are also merging fields and who can see opportunities in places that others don't, is exactly the type of environment for fostering this divergent thinking.

Secondly, the future entrepreneur will have a robust understanding of finance and business practices, in addition to international competency. As economics and markets become more globalized, entrepreneurs that understand these international markets will be better at producing globally applicable solutions. Furthermore, the future entrepreneur will benefit from understanding both common human behaviors and cultural differences as well as possessing the communication skills to effectively navigate human nature and cultural differences.

The future entrepreneur requires a diverse design skill set. Consumers now want what they own to make them feel good and look good. As social media and technology proliferates globally, aesthetically pleasing and user intuitive products have a definitive advantage. Furthermore, elegant solutions shift the needle of global culture, changing how people view the world and people around them for the better.

The future entrepreneur is not just a business leader but a cultural leader. Profitability will just be one driving factor for the future entrepreneur. They will also aim to proliferate values they deem important by solving meaningful problems and acting in both socially and environmentally ethical ways. Many entrepreneurs are already pioneering these ideas, finding innovative ways to merge problem solving, commerce, and social good. The future entrepreneur is not only able to keep their company tied to their values and ideals, but also serves as a cultural influencer that is able to use their own personal brand to rally support around their ideas.

Finally, entrepreneurs of the future will need to be digitally literate in order to engage with the world around them and build solutions to problems we previously thought were unsolvable.

While this is by no means a complete image of what entrepreneurialism will look like in the coming years, I believe that these are going to be some of the key competencies entrepreneurs will require to address global issues. Drexel's Custom Design Major program is the best way for me to pursue building out these competencies, because it uniquely gives me access to a diverse set of learning opportunities.

For starters, I am able to get the general business skills needed to pursue entrepreneurship. The best way, in my opinion, to do this, is to not only dive into the entrepreneurial mindset classes offered in Close School, but also the technical administration, financial, operations management, and sales management classes from LeBow. Engaging in the diversity of these two programs will give me the background to run companies smoothly. I do not need to be the accountant or the lawyer, but I do need to know what they do and how to comprehend and assess if their work is good.

The second skill set that I need to develop is my design background. The majority of this will be through product design in Westphal. These classes will allow me to approach most problems from a design framework. Using product design, I will be able to take ideas and products from ideation to production.

In addition, designers and entrepreneurs need more than just a design process. At Westphal, I plan on honing my ability to express design ideas by taking graphic design and UI/UX design courses. These will make sure that both my digital and physical solutions are appealing to those who use them.

I also plan on taking a string of computer science classes from the college of computing and informatics. These will allow me not only to flesh out ideas when I have them, but also will give me the basis to keep up with new tech development and communicate with developers in the future. As the world becomes more digitized, being able to integrate into the technology workflow is an absolutely critical ability for entrepreneurs.

The 5th element of my toolbox will come from the College of Arts and Sciences, where I aim to build a more humanities focused lens that will help me frame and contextualize problems.

These are mainly going to be political science and philosophy courses. These will allow me to build a global perspective, understand what problems are becoming pressing issues globally, and gain enough context in key areas to be able to dialogue and advocate in a meaningful way with others.

Limiting myself to one field I feel, would cripple my ability to be a versatile entrepreneur in the future. No one really knows what the future looks like or what problems will be put in front of us, so shouldn't we try to give our future problem solvers as wide and deep a tool box as possible?

I am intent on equipping myself to be able to respond to whatever comes at me through efficient, effective, creative, critical thinking processes that are purposely non-disciplinary. In my eyes, this is the manifestation of unconstrained intellectual rigor for the purpose of innovative problem solving.

My goals in life don't just start after graduation. I plan on working on solving problems all through my education, just like I have up until this point. No other institution or program is suited as well as Drexel to facilitate this vision of the future. For me, this is just one of the first steps in my goal to make the world a better place.

Year 1**Fall 2019**

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
Introduction to Honors Program	HNRS 200		1
The Drexel Experience	UNIV 101		2
Introduction to Multi-Disciplinary Methods	CSDN 101		1
Innovation Ecosystem	ENTP 100		1
History and Analysis of Product Design	PROD 101		3
Foundations of Business I	BUSN 101		4
General Psychology I	PSY 101		3
Applied Design Visualization	PROD 235		3
Total:			18

Winter 2019

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
Life Strategies I	ENTP 101		3
Knowledge by Design Seminar	CSDN 102	CSDN 101	1
Career Management and Professional Development	COOP 101		0
Business Statistics II	STAT 202	STAT 201	4
Modern Materials in Your World	MATE 120		3
	ACCT 110	Dana	
Foundations of Business II	BUSN 102		4
Mechanical Behavior of Materials for Engineers	MATE 121		1
Total:			16

Spring 2020

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
Computer Programming I	CS 171		3
Accounting Essentials for New Ventures	ACCT 120		3
Introduction to Engineering Design & Manufacturing	ENGR 111		3
Microeconomics	ECON 301		4
Total:			13

Summer 2020

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
No Classes			
Total:			0

Year 2

Fall 2020

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
CO-OP	COOP 201		0
Total:			0

Winter 2020

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
CO-OP	COOP 201		0
Total:			0

Spring 2021

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
Computer Programming II	CS 172	CS 171	3
Innovative Problem Solving	CSDN 210		3
Introduction to Finance	FIN 301	STAT 201 and A	4
Applied Materials in Product Design	PROD 255	PROD 235, MAT	3
Introduction to Product Design	PROD 210	PROD 101	3
Total:			16

Summer 2021

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
Advanced Programming Tools and Te	CS 265	CS 172	3
Economics of Small Business	ECON 260	ECON 201	4
Introduction to Marketing Management	MKTG 201		4
Applied Making I	PROD 205		3
Macroeconomics	ECON 321	ECON 201, 202,	4
Total:			18

Year 3

Fall 2021

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
CO-OP	COOP 201		0
Total:			0

Winter 2021

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
CO-OP	COOP 201		0
Product Design Form Studio	PROD 220		4
Total:			4

Spring 2022

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
Data Structures	CS 260	CS 265	3
Mathematical Foundations of Computer Science	CS 270	CS 172	3
Intermediate Corporate Finance	FIN 302	FIN 301 and STA 200	4
Product Design Process Studio	PROD 230		4
Multimodal Research	CSDN 220		3
Total:			17

Summer 2022

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
Web and Mobile App Development	CS 275	CS 265	3
Business Ethics	PHIL 301		3
Marketing for New Ventures	MKTG 364	MKTG 201	4
Organizational Behavior	ORGB 300		4
Introduction to Technology Innovation	MGMT 201		4
Total:			18

Year 4**Fall 2022**

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
CO-OP	COOP 201		0
Total:			0

Winter 2022

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
CO-OP	COOP 201		0
Total:			0

Spring 2023

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
Artificial Intelligence	CS 380	CS 260 & 270	3
Designing Innovative Organizations	MGMT 301		4
Introduction to Business Analytics	BUSN 260		4
Qualitative Research Methods	COM 220		3
Total:			14

Summer 2023

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
International Money and Finance	INTB 336	ECON 201, 202	4
Philosophy of Technology	PHIL 351		3
Media Anthropology	ANTH 330		3
Strategy and Competitive Advantage	MGMT 450		4
Total:			14

Year 5

Fall 2023

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
Custom-Designed Major Project I	CSDN 304		3
Cultural Theory I	ANTH 410		3
Interdisciplinary Product Design Studio	PROD 340		4
Social Entrepreneurship	ENTP 535		3
Total:			13

Winter 2023

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
Custom-Designed Major Project II	CSDN 305	CSDN 304	3
Applied Human Centered Design	PROD 345		3
Approaches to Intercultural Behavior	ANTH 312		3
Urbanism, Health & the Built Environment	URBS 650		3
Total:			12

Spring 2024

Name	Code	Pre-Reqs	Credits
Custom-Designed Major Project III	CSDN 306	CSDN 305	3
Entrepreneurial Law	BLAW 346		4
Team Development and Leadership	ORGB 400		4
Intercultural Communication	COM 345		3
Introduction to Engineering Management	EGMT 462		3
Total:			17