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# Designed Shock: A Card Game to Improve Cultural Awareness and Empathy

Coulentianos, Marianna

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# Designed Shock

75 CARDS TO HELP DESIGNERS GAIN CULTURAL AWARENESS AND HUMILITY



**Before**



**During**



**After**

# Are you about to design in a new setting, for users other than yourself?

Pick a card and do the prompt.

Remember, culture shock can happen across the globe,  
across the street, and across the room

## ***Example Card***

**Bring a snack from home.**

**Ask someone to recommend a local snack and  
share yours with them.**

**How does each snack taste to both of you?**

Find the prompt on the front side of the card

## ***Example Card***

**During**

Find the phase of the experience here, the color of the card also indicates the phase



# **Designed Shock**



To learn about why we designed this prompt by looking up the culture shock phase and the cultural dimension it is related to, on the associated concept card

## Concepts – Culture Shock

Each card builds on one of the following stages of culture shock



### Contact

Surface level differences,  
minimal frustrations



### Disintegration

Notice deep differences,  
difficulty predicting social  
interactions



### Reintegration

Judgment and rejection  
of other culture



### Autonomy

Flexible thinking and  
acceptance



### Independence

Trust, balance, and no  
stereotyping

## Concepts – Cultural Dimensions

Each card explores one of the following dimension of culture



### **Social Relationships**

Explores opposing concepts of equality and authority, individualism and collectivism, nurture and challenge.



### **Epistemological Beliefs**

Stability seeking and uncertainty acceptance, logic and reason, causality, and complexity.



### **Temporal Perceptions**

Explore different perceptions of clock time and event time, people's paths and goals, cycles.

# Feedback

- Not used individually if no incentive to
- Differentiate action cards with reflection cards
- Don't differentiate Before/During/After so categorically
- Make it into an app

# To do

- Focus groups with student orgs
- Consulting with community engagement leaders
- Consulting with (graphic) designers
- Iterative re-design
- Test in a real setting



# Focus group - 50min - 4-9 students - 5 sessions

- Personal experience - 15min
  - How do you prepare for your design/volunteer experience? What resources do you wish you had? What could have enhanced your experience? - group discussion
  - Describe an “aha” moment you have had when travelling/when designing - individual
- Present the cards, their objective - 10min
  - Initial feedback - how and why would you use them? - group discussion
- Break into two groups
  - How would you change the design? - 10min
  - Evaluate a prompt - individual - 5min
  - Write your own prompts and name the cards - 10min

# REFERENCES

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**Cultural Dimensions**

P. Parrish, J. A. Linder-VanBerschoot; "Cultural Dimensions of Learning: Addressing the Challenges of Multicultural Instruction", IRRODL, 2010

**Cultural Awareness  
and Humility**

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