SYLLABUS
The Atlas of Creative Tools
SLN: 91877, 91912, 91978, 91979
3 Units, 7 weeks, Fall 2017
Wednesdays 8:30 -10:30 am
August 17 – October 6, 2017

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DESCRIPTION
Based on methods cultivated over many years by choreographer Liz Lerman and colleagues, this course will offer a series of creative tools for laboratory-style application through online presentations, live class sessions, and weekly assignments. With a cross-disciplinary focus and the conviction that everyone can enhance their creative capacity, we will explore structure, sequence, and synthesis of creative processes. The course is appropriate for artists of any discipline, those involved in creative pursuits such as design and writing, or anyone interested in how creativity works.

This live/online hybrid is being conducted as the second phase of a project to develop an online course, and will be selectively documented in video. Students will be required to use digital tools to access course content, for communicating with peers, documenting their work, and responding to assignments.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
• Gain an understanding of creativity that bridges practice and theory with personal experience and intentions/aspirations.
• Learn a series of creative tools and ideas about how to use them in a range of personal and collaborative contexts and across a variety of arts disciplines and other domains.
• Comprehend a range of creative functions and ways to access them through tools, thinking processes, and modes of action, reaction, and interaction.
• Identify and apply creative tools both in isolation and through integration/synthesis.
• Develop online strategies for future iterations of the course.

CALENDAR
Class sessions are organized according to a series of functional/theoretical concepts. Each class will impart new tools. Assignments will afford the opportunity to apply and practice these tools, sometimes in relation to a project of your own.

Each weekly unit consists of three parts:
• **Part A:** Online pre-class preparation material consisting of videos, journal questions, activities, readings, assignments, and/or discussions
• **Class Meeting:** The in-person class session that meets every Wednesday of the term
• **Part B:** Online post-class follow-up material consisting of videos, journal questions, activities, readings, assignments, and/or discussions. *All online assignments are due by 11:59 PM on Sunday of each Week.*

**Week 1: INTRO AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

**Part A:** 8/17 – 8/22  
**Class Meeting:** 8/23  
**Part B:** 8/23 – 8/27

- Discern creative actions and processes in relation to creativity theory and the concept of creative tools.
- Exercise imagination, observation and inquiry to give form to an idea or concern.

You will be introduced to foundational concepts for this course including creativity, creative tools, embodiment, and breaking knowledge down. Lectures and activities will offer a chance to reflect on these ideas in practice, theory, and in relation to your own experience as we consider the possibilities for constructing conditions for creative production. We’ll initiate the use of creative tools with Postcards, in which you engage visualization, physicalization, and verbalization through a sequence of actions.

TOOLS: One to Ten, Postcards, Walk and Talk (Generative)

**Week 2: CREATIVITY AS PRACTICE: OBSERVATION, INQUIRY, AND DISCOVERY**

**Part A:** 8/25 – 8/29  
**Class Meeting:** 8/30  
**Part B:** 8/30 – 9/3

- Discern creative actions and processes in personal experience and a larger theoretical framework.
- Employ observation, naming, and inquiry toward practical and creative ends.
- Probe intuition.

You can perceive the external world, attend to your internal process, and name and question the connections between them: these are creative practices that we’ll explore through the use of tools. You’ll articulate your own creative process in relation to creativity theory, and analyze intuitive choices to probe the deeper knowledge behind them.

TOOLS: Ask a Question, Spontaneous Gesture, Annotation, Four Stages

**Week 3: MAKING, LEARNING, AND THE THINKING THAT CONNECTS THEM**

**Part A:** 9/1 – 9/5  
**Class Meeting:** 9/6  
**Part B:** 9/6 – 9/10

- Generate ideas and content useful for future development.
- Comprehend and apply concept of divergent thinking in multiple forms.
- Experience the effects of naming, framing, and categorizing to both limit and open up creative content.
Employing the principle of divergent thinking we’ll experience structures for generating content, then look at them in relation to our capacities for contextualizing, categorizing, and assigning multiple names. Observing with and without reason, we’ll begin to examine how we generate ideas by making associations between connected and random data.

TOOLS: Perpetual Prompt, Observe the Room, Odd Image Out, Image Scramble, Build a Phrase

**Week 4: FUNCTIONING ON THE HORIZONTAL, THINKING ON A GRID**

**Part A: 9/8 – 9/12**  
**Class Meeting: 9/13**

- Devise conceptual structures; use structure to drive thinking.
- Employ the Thinking Grid as a strategy for comprehension, ideation, and discovery.

Creative effectiveness turns on our ability to function across a horizontal spectrum of possibility, to balance and orchestrate complementary capacities. We’ll practice this agility through the use of analogy and the construction of Thinking Grids, a tool that breaks down and recombines raw material in ways that lead you to discovery and new possibilities.

TOOLS: Structure Analogy, Thinking Grid

**Week 5: THE MAKING OF MEANING, THE MEANS OF MAKING**

**Part A: 9/15 – 9/19**  
**Class Meeting: 9/20**

- Apply methods for exploring scope, specificity, and depth in creative material
- Combine multiple modes of thought and action.
- Devise exploratory structures.

The tools you’ll experience this week are based in an artistic practice that synthesizes movement with spoken narrative. Exploring content through such combinations gets you to probe meaning and span a wider range of expression. This in turn helps you condition your ability to integrate multiple modes of thought and action. Ultimately you’ll devise your own exploratory structures, using constraints to both heighten specificity and to expand your scope as you both add and subtract meaning.

TOOLS: Equivalents, Movement Metaphor, Detail, Scripting

**Week 6: STRUCTRE AS CONTAINER, STRUCTURE AS ENGINE**

**Part A: 9/22 – 9/26**  
**Class Meeting: 9/27**

- Employ structure as the source of ideas and an organizer of material.
- Craft and edit work using principles, tools, and structures.

You can fill an empty structure or you can find the structure to hold content you’ve developed. In this unit we consider structure as both starting point and destination. Based on the principle that converging is creative, we explore tools for crafting and editing that help resolve work into finished form.

TOOLS: Hierarchical Grid, Delayed Mirror, Walk and Talk (Editorial), Parameters
Week 7: SYNTHESIS: REVIEW AND SHOWING
Online Only: 9/29 – 10/6

- Assess outcome from the constructive perspective of work in progress.

Throughout the course you’ve applied the Atlas of Creative Tools to a project of your own. In this all-online final unit you’ll craft a work-in-progress outcome and report on your applications and variations of the creative tools shared in this course.

READINGS
Excerpts from the following, among others:
Available through the ASU Library:

Available through the ASU Library:


Available through Amazon.com and in multiple e-reader formats (iBooks, Kindle, Google Play, etc.)

EXPECTATIONS FOR THIS CLASS
The prerequisite for the class is an attitude of curiosity, openness, and a willingness to experiment. It is useful that participants want to continue to evolve their own creative practices as well as push the boundaries of working together.

You will have assignments that are fulfilled by you alone and you will also be working in pairs and in groups. There is an expectation from the beginning that any issues that arise from process will be dealt with in a timely manner.

GRADING
If you come to class, participate in discussions, bring your personal inquiry into the room, collaborate with your group, move ideas forward, complete all online
assignments, take some responsibility for the success of your project(s) you will automatically get a B

Criteria for an A are qualitative, based on the degree to which you pursue, experience, and articulate a breakthrough that advances your learning and that of the class. This might mean that you made a discovery through hard work and consistent questioning, found your own synthesis of creative processes, or made a unique contribution to the research embodied in the course. But in order to get an A you have to work, and that is not just about counting hours. **Note: This component of your grade is reflected in the Engaged Participation value below.

Assessments consist of the following:

*Weekly Journal Entries:*
Throughout the course you will be prompted to respond to questions related to the online lecture videos, which you will keep track of in a journal of your choice – handwritten or digital. Each week you will submit your journal by uploading images/scans of your notebook or a file of your digital notebook (Word, PDF, etc.). You may submit a .ZIP file if your journal is multiple images or consists of both photos and other files.

*Digital Portfolio Entries:*
You will be utilizing a digital portfolio through ASU’s Digication for posting artifacts relevant to your discovery and practice of the creative tools you will encounter in this class on a weekly basis.

*Online Discussions:*
Throughout the course you will have opportunities for discussion with your classmates in the online environment. Discussion prompts may be topics from the lectures, discoveries made while practicing the creative tools or findings from a group activity. Please keep in mind that in order to engage in meaningful online discussions, you must post a complete and thoughtful response to the discussion prompts, as well as respond to your classmates’ postings.

*Work in Progress Project Outcome:*
During our first session you will identify a project in an area of your study or practice to which you will regularly apply some of the tools imparted in the course. At a midpoint and at the culmination of the class you will produce an outcome in the form of a report or artistic expression in any medium, reflecting these applications. The emphasis is on work in progress, that is, what is emerging and what you are learning, and will be assessed for these factors rather than resolution, crafting, or polish.

*Final Reflection:*
You will also write a reflection on your experience of the course, self-assessing your experience based on three criteria: application of tools in work and life outside the classroom, significant discoveries you’ve made, and personal growth based on your own measures.

Grades are calculated as follows:

- Online Assessments (Journal/Portfolio/Discussions): 300 points
- Work in Progress Project Outcome Part 1: 100 points
- Work in Progress Project Outcome Part 2: 200 points
- Final Reflection: 250 points
- Engaged Participation**: 150 points

**WHY WE ARE TEACHING THIS CLASS**

We define creative tools as: *instrumental* to process but *detachable* from the context in which they originated; *usable* across multiple domains; *transdisciplinary* in application; *repeatable* and *transferrable* to multiple contexts and applications, where they can be *personalized*; *evolvable* into new forms; grounded in *principles*; capable of being *sequenced into larger structures* of learning, making, and action.

Says Liz Lerman, “Evolving and sharing artistic tools has been an obsession for much of my career. Since my early days as an artist, through years of building choreographic and collaborative work, I’ve recognized such tools as important, functioning both as a means to and an outcome of artistic process. I accepted a professorship at ASU in part as an opportunity to test the use and sharing of creative tools in a higher education settings and across disciplines.”

The way these methods have come into being is itself a tool. We believe that anyone can begin to harvest their own knowledge, intuition and practice in ways that will make a more vibrant world. Digital technology offers ways to expand the reach and impact of tool sharing, which motivates our interest using the present class as a laboratory toward an online course.

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

Please do not contact your instructors with technical questions. Herberger Online handles all technical questions and issues that may arise in this course.

**Please contact the support team immediately if you encounter technical issues while completing an assignment and you are unable to resolve the problem and reset your work.**

The Herberger Online support team is available to assist you 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You may reach them anytime at:

- holsupport@asu.edu
- 1-888-298-4117
• 480-965-3057 (International)
When contacting support, please provide:
• The full name of this course (ABC 123: Long Name)
• The title(s) of any assignment(s) you’re having trouble with
• A brief description of the problem
• Detailed, step-by-step instructions to reproduce the problem

Digication Digital Portfolio Support
For support related to creating and editing your Digication digital portfolio, please refer to the following resources:
• Digication Help Resources:  https://asu.digication.com/get_help_asu_eportfolio_resources/Welcome23/published
• Digication Online Help Desk:  http://support.digication.com/
• Email support questions to: support@digication.com

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS
To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact the ASU Disability Resource Center (Phone: (480) 965-1234; TDD: (480) 965-9000). This is a very important step, as accommodations cannot be made retroactively. If you have a letter from their office indicating that you have a disability which requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me no later than the end of the first week of the semester so we can discuss the accommodations that you might need in this class.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL
If you wish to withdraw from this course, it is your responsibility to do so. Course registration changes are processed through MyASU: http://my.asu.edu.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
All necessary and appropriate sanctions will be issued to all parties involved with plagiarizing any and all course work. Plagiarism and any other form of academic dishonesty that is in violation with the Student Code of Conduct will not be tolerated. http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/studentlife/judicial/academic_integrity.html

Do not share your course ID and password with anyone. Log out of the course website when you are finished with it. Do not allow another student to use the course website under your password, even if s/he is also in the course. Each student is fully responsible for all activity that takes place on the course website under his/her user ID.