



Earth Day 2025



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## Designing from the Inside Out: Earth, Awareness, and Creative Action

This collaborative design studio invites students to engage with design as a practice of transformation—of self, society, and systems. Integrating **head, heart, and hand**, the course explores how environmental stewardship, and eco-wisdom can inform ethical and sustainable design in an era of ecological crisis.

At the heart of the course is the **Medicine Wheel**—an Earth-centered, Indigenous framework that serves as an **epistemological guide** to support the integration of **physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual** ways of knowing. This holistic model situates design within a **continuum of care, repair, and responsibility**, inviting students to reflect not only on what they design, but *how they live and relate to the world around them*.

Rooted in **contemplative pedagogy**, the studio cultivates self-awareness, critical reflection, and deep listening as essential tools for creativity and design leadership. Through in-class exercises, mindfulness practices, reflective essays, and facilitated dialogue, students develop the inner capacity to design with intention, presence, and relational awareness.

Three team-based projects structure the studio: Team-based research & presentation, collaborative storytelling zines, and an “engagement project” that includes design artifacts and eco-art workshop activities for public participation during Earth Day, a campus-wide event fostering community dialogue and creative action for environmental stewardship.

This course empowers students to reimagine the role of design—not as a tool of consumption, but as a means of healing, connection, and change. It is a call to action to become designers who lead with empathy, act with purpose, and create with the Earth in mind.