Using Innovative Spatial Story Telling to reveal University Student Anxiety, Panic Attacks and Suicide

Jeffrey Haase

The Ohio State University Department of Design

Introduction
Across the country, university mental health reports have been identifying an alarming rise in student mental health issues, diagnosis and mental health related deaths. A graduate studio course at the Ohio State University Department of Design is looking to discover, address and communicate the story of this troubling mental health epidemic. This group of 10 graduate students and their professor spent the semester researching current mental health issues on university campuses and then plan to construct a complex spatial narrative about what they learned to the campus community and the world.

Objective
The course is set up as a studio with one collaborative objective, to explore a complex problem and collectively construct a story based on their findings. The story will exist on two specific platforms. The analog version will consist of a spatial sensorial exhibit in an art gallery that is located in downtown Columbus, Ohio and an online version of the
narrative launched approximately 3 months prior to the exhibit. The online version will act as marketing for the exhibit and later revised to record the physical exhibit experience.

Expected Outcomes
This devastating problem of mental health on campuses is part of our everyday context. Our goal is to use our design thinking principles, design making and creative storytelling skills to communicate an experience that addresses the issues, history and possible solutions surrounding mental health on campuses. We will be studying current and historical examples of installation artists, exhibit designers and other spatial storytellers to inform our decisions about representing ideas and information we collect around the mental health epidemic. The physical exhibit opens March 21, 2020 and the design of the exhibit and the corresponding online component will be completed by the end of the autumn 2019 semester as part of this presentation.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Jeffrey Haase is an Associate Professor and Coordinator for the Interior Design major in the Department of Design. He is an architect, designer and artist whose research is broadly defined as innovative place making. Specifically, his work is “process-based making” that explores spatial conditions of scale, representation, emotional content and material innovation. These research efforts have resulted in local exhibitions, international workshops, papers and presentations at conferences in United States, Europe and the Middle East.