

Design Etude U/You: Three Pathways at Stanford

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Why...are you here (at Stanford)? What are *your* most important reasons to get an education? Based on these reasons, how would you arrange your time at Stanford, in the form of your course schedule, groups and activities, projects, internships, and even the people you “run with”? How would you feel about the resulting *you*? This is a thought experiment and design exercise to help you consider and plan out your Stanford experience, THINK 66 style.

Part A. “Why Am I Here?”

Reflect on the things that are most important to *you* in a Stanford education. For example, is college a place to prepare you for the next phase (e.g., getting a job or gaining admission into a graduate program)? Or is it a place to discover and explore what is genuinely interesting to you? Should college be *useful*? Or should it be an *experience* worthwhile in itself? Can it be both *extrinsically useful* and *intrinsically valuable*?

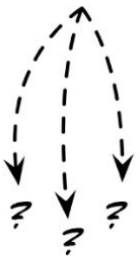
In class, we talked about two kind of motivation for our choices: the means-to-ends and the ends-in-themselves. In your reflection, sort your answers into two columns: “means” and “ends”. It’s okay to put some things into both columns. (e.g., food is a means for survival *and* one could value a food for its taste and personal meaning.)

MEANS
TO AN END

ENDS
IN THEMSELVES

Part B. Three Pathways

Next, sketch out, with as many details as possible, three possible pathways for yourself at Stanford. For each pathway, sketch out a quarter-by-quarter course schedule; feel free to add additional activities and organizations you would engage with along that particular pathway. Be mindful of specific personal and shared constraints (e.g., time); don’t try to do too much.



1. **“Means”-favored:** a pathway optimized to position yourself for the things in your “means” column above—e.g., the next steps beyond Stanford.

2. **“Ends”-favored:** a pathway optimized for your “ends” column—e.g., your college *experience* and your happiness beyond college, regardless of jobs/career/livelihood.

3. **But wait, could there be a synthesis?** *Artful Design* (Principle 1.16) states that Design is a “radical synthesis of means and ends.” In a third pathway, sketch out what a synthesis of your “means” and “ends” might look like.

*How might these branches differ in their resulting versions of **you**? For each pathway, do you feel it speak to you as a person? In each case, how might you feel if you achieved it?*