

OS 305

ACTION PLAN



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THE PLAN

CHERISH DEAN

**THE FOLLOWING IS MY DEC 2020 ACTION
PLAN FOR OS 305.**

Modeled in the style of Cameron Herold's "Vivid Vision documents, I've chosen to present my action plan to you as an overview and proposal of sorts. In the following pages, I will take you through a bit of my vivid vision for three years from now, before stepping back to today's more immediate goals and next steps, and demonstrating how it all ties together.



SHORT-TERM +
LONG-TERM
GOALS +
COURSE
CONCEPTS

Drawing upon the following course concepts:

- Cameron Herold's "Vivid Vision" Ted Talk
- Michael Arena's Adaptive Space
- Gig Economy Article + Concept of a Holding Environment
- The Overcommitted Organization Article



CHERISH DEAN, CIRCA

Three years from now, I will be 23 years old. A few short months ago, I will have returned from 8 months abroad as one of four 2022 Bonderman fellows, inevitably changed and influenced by the experience. I will be applying for entry-level jobs in the tech and entertainment industries while simultaneously working on graduate school applications respectively for the Gates-Cambridge Scholars, Rhodes Scholars, and Knight Hennessy Scholars programs.

In 2023, I will have at least one complete manuscript. One story written start to finish that I've begun self-editing and have put through to a few beta readers. I'll have a well-maintained personal website that details my writing history with flash fiction, short stories, personal essays, poetry, and video games. It will be something that I am proud of and that communicates me as I am, always learning and growing, a renaissance woman heavily skewed towards the arts.

BUILDING MY NETWORK

In the book *Adaptive Space*, by Michael Arena, he explains Adaptive Space as a place, overlapping with and existing in between the entrepreneurial and operational sections of an organization for the purpose of positively disrupting the org from within. Four types of individuals are needed to create this space. In taking his assessment, my primary results indicated, of the four types, that I was high in broker (90%) and energizer (72%) qualities. The former indicates that I do well in being a bridge, forming connections and sharing ideas between groups, but I am susceptible to becoming overwhelmed doing this; the latter indicates that I'm able to amplify others, supporting them and helping their ideas garner attention, but again, at risk of overburdening myself.

In recognizing these qualities in myself, I intend to be more aware of my vulnerabilities and to lean into my communicative strengths. I can keep in mind that I work best in the diffusion zone, helping to spread ideas. And, considering Arena's teabag analogy from class, I can apply these things to myself by reaching out and cultivating my connections in small samples--interacting as a teabag in a mug vs a teabag in a pool. Furthermore, I intend to maintain current relationships with folks like those I know pictured below who work in various tech or entertainment fields, in order to attempt making myself more central in the network of my desired industries.





HOLDING ENVIRONMENT BACK HOME; WHAT NOW?

Though I'm a student, not (yet) a freelancer in the gig economy, I think we feel the same "produce or perish" pressure that such individuals described. We must keep up on readings, discussion boards, assignments. Are we students if our participation is not logged?

To reach the lofty 2023 vision I imagined, it is imperative that I create a productive setting for myself, supported by the four components below in order to be most successful amidst COVID uncertainty.



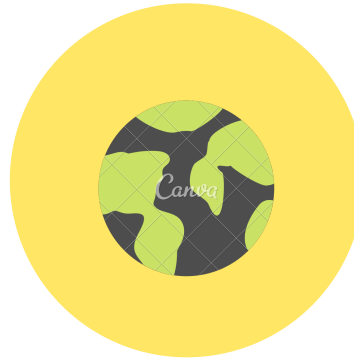
PLACE

I think that I'll benefit from a "fighter pilot cockpit" set-up as described in the article. Currently, I tend to work anywhere and everywhere, setting up camp (so to speak) with laptop, chargers, and relevant notes fanned around me. Next semester, I intend to deliberately limit work to my desk (kitchen table an occasional exception).



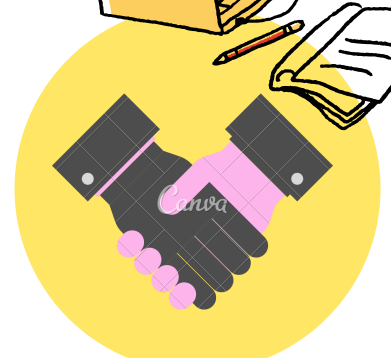
ROUTINE

Currently, I have no routine and in some ways, it's become an excuse. I need flexibility and variety, but I've been giving myself too much. Next semester, I intend to introduce some consistent activities (like daily Duolingo, journal entries) while blocking off "variety time" to account for my desire for unstructured time.



PURPOSE

My purpose is to learn. Always. To learn Spanish, to learn how to more expertly craft a narrative, to learn how to learn what my greatest strengths are and how they complement others. Another major point for me is creating things that resonate with people and help them feel seen--that is of extreme personal importance to me.



PEOPLE

Various assessments and frameworks have confirmed I am social and I have the incomplete list here to prove it. Immediate family (sister & mom), Dungeons & Dragons group (5), LeaderShape group (5), Spanish-speaking partner Osvaldo, close friends Amoolya, Bri, and Cindy, mentors like Dr. Fields and Don Roach. I'm grateful for them.

THE OVERCOMMITTED INDIVIDUAL



WHO I AM...AND WHAT I NEED TO DO

In the past I have frequently spread myself too thin, overcommitting, dropping, re-calibrating, and doing a whole mess of adjustments. I frequently joke that my arch-enemy is the concept of balance. This semester, my first as a transfer, I took 18 credits and began with 5+ extracurriculars.

This did not last.

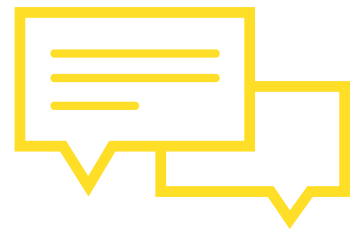
In the "The Overcommitted Organization," that we read this semester, the authors detail the struggles of organizations in trying to have individuals operate across multiple teams or divisions. While benefits existed such as sharing of knowledge across an org and the more efficient use of time and effort, it also led to consequences such as confusion of priorities, decreased cohesion and burnout, to name a few.

Though I am but one individual, the various groups that I operate in that make up my classes and organizations often put me in a similar position to the employees like this article describes.

As an individual, I'm like a leader in the article, but instead of managing a team, I'm mapping out and analyzing my own connections and team (or class or student org) memberships and responsibilities. In monitoring this, I can keep track of where my energy is going and figure out where I might have to brace myself when needs change. Furthermore, it is up to me to intentionally build trust within my groups.

To be especially cautious, I am holding off on making most commitments next semester beyond classes.

IN SUMMARY



A SMART GOAL BREAKDOWN

I. Networking to My Dream Job

S- Maintain my connections with Cooper (UX Researcher @ Insomniac Games) and Cassie (20+years UX experience). Cultivate further video game connections through Wolverine Soft @ UMich and Riana (10+ years in Game Industry)

M- I've created a document where I'm keeping track of how we met, what we've talked about, and what I hope to discuss in the future.

A- I have a 30-min call with Riana planned for Dec. 16th. (Just one example.) I am comfortable reaching out to people.

R- I hope to work in UX and/or a creative role, specifically in tech or video games.

T- WolverineSoft has weekly meetings and I hope to attend at least 2-3 a semester. I have plans to reconnect with Cassie at the end of next semester.

II. Crafting My Own Personal Normal

S- Mostly covered on "Holding Environment" page, but I intend to more strictly budget my time in order to create a routine, primarily, and this will feed into shaping people, purpose, and place.

M- I use an hourly planner, but in the past have just blocked off classes. Moving forward, I'll include classes as well as schedule "variety time," and other activities such as exercise, Spanish practice, etc.

A- I have my planner, I have my desk, I have my support group. I have everything I need to make this change--I just have to take those first steps.

R- In managing a COVID-impacted semester now, and in navigating future career uncertainty, these skills will benefit me in all of my life.

T- I intend to begin implementing this stricter routine beginning in January and will adjust over the course of the semester.

III. Cutting a Truce with Balance

S- Practicing how to say no to invitations/opportunities and beginning the semester with as close to *just* classes on my plate as possible.

M- Will use a "labor log" style google sheets document to monitor where I'm dedicating my time.

A- I have a "labor log" template from my WRI 220 class this semester that I can use and know I can keep up on.

R- Time management and recognition of my own capacity will always be a crucial skill to build.

T- As with the above goal, I intend to track my progress with this during the winter 2021 semester

IN CONCLUSION



I'm excited for the future. I'm excited for this winter break, for next semester, for the world we'll all emerge in post-COVID. The future is brighter than all the yellow I used in this document :)

Some concepts I didn't dive into above that I'd like to give a brief honorable mention are the following:

- Social Brain Hypothesis
- 4 Is - Initiate, Inquire, Invest, Influence
- Simon Sinek "What is your Why?"

In considering SBH, I am always thinking about this—I love meeting new people, I love keeping up with friends, and I do not love recognizing I cannot maintain all of these relationships at all times. Still, I'm thankful to be aware of SBH, and to have the ability to be more cognizant of my social limitations. With the 4 Is, I considered discussing them in connection with my network and that SMART goal, but chose to narrow in on the one concept. Likewise with Sinek's work which I considered connecting with the purpose aspect of holding environments.

Truly though, the future is exciting! In these pages, I outlined some dreams, some goals, some concepts, and detailed my next steps towards it all. And I can't wait to get started.

“THERE IS NOTHING NOBLE IN
BEING SUPERIOR TO YOUR
FELLOW MAN; TRUE NOBILITY
IS BEING SUPERIOR TO YOUR
FORMER SELF

- ERNEST HEMINGWAY

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