

Full Name: Robin Bearss
Title of Project: Cosplay Adventures
Thematic Area: Creativity
Expected Start Date: May 2016
Expected End Date: July 2016

ABSTRACT

For my proposed honor's experience I plan on constructing a costume which I will make using various materials, and tools. Some examples of these include: pipe cleaners, a hot glue gun, a blow torch, or colored construction paper. First I will draw a sketch of the desired finished product, including any additional accessories to the side. I will then discern which materials to use for which pieces of the costume, and what methods I will use to hold them together. A list will be made of the materials I need (such as cloth, pieces of cardboard, foam, felt, tape, etc...) will then be obtained either from my household or the store. These articles will then be put together to generate the desired final product. Although the specific costume I wish to make is yet to be determined, I will make sure to choose one that involves complex tasks to last me up to four months. I will also make sure that the costume I choose to make has components of the production process that I have never encountered before, and therefore am not comfortable with. If I discover that the costume I choose requires a significantly shorter time frame than expected, I will start creating another costume after the first one is completed. Everything that I will complete for the first costume will also be completed for the second costume. I plan on working on the costume for six hours every week- two hours on Monday, two hours on Wednesday, and two hour on Friday. This will account for 78 hours of work on my experience. Additionally, at the end of the week I will record a 15-20 minute reflection video of myself, answering a series of questions that are listed below in the "ON-GOING REFLECTION" part of the proposal. This experience will start on the first Monday of May and continue until the last Saturday in July, on which I will film my final reflection. I will have a total of about 91 hours put into this experience at the end of the time allotment. After the product(s) are complete, I will showcase them at a convention, and engage in conversation about costumes with others who dressed up. I will also document my convention experiences by filming them, and possibly the conversations I have with the people I meet.

My personal connection with this experience evolves from my love of Japanese culture and Halloween. Cosplay is an art form originating from Japan that allows one to express themselves, while simultaneously occupying another's persona. The word can be separated into its literal meaning "costume-play". Halloween is celebrated in a similar sense, with children dressing up like scary monsters or ghouls. I love the idea of preparing a disguise and wearing it. Conventions are also something that interests me because the sense of community is very high, with sometimes complete strangers reenacting different scenes from their favorite show.

My goals for the experience include: learning how to choose what materials to use for different processes, learning to use tools that are foreign to me, and becoming familiar enough with the materials that I work with so that I can use similar techniques for future projects. This project will involve many hours spent creating things and using my imagination to envision what I want things to look like, which is why I chose creativity as my thematic area.

EXPERIENCE ADVISOR

Megan Minton
Academic Advising
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Ms. Minton is my academic advisor, and I plan on meeting with her one-on-one to discuss my plans and procedures of this experience. I feel she will give me helpful advice, or direct me to someone else who can help me if she cannot. I will meet with Ms. Minton once before the start of my experience, and then twice more throughout the proposed experience. This way, if I become hung up on something she will be able to point me in the right direction.

CONNECTION TO THE LEARNING OUTCOMES

DISCOVER NEW TECHNIQUES TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE, CONSIDER OPTIONS, MAKE NEW CONNECTIONS, AND ASK QUESTIONS.

Throughout this experience there will be multiple paths that i can take to accomplish the same outcome. Different types of paints, plastic pieces, and materials in general could alter the functionality and presentation of the costume. Being aware of the different choices and using information such as available funding and the time frame to discern which path to take is definitely something I will do (CONSIDER OPTIONS). This should take up to two hours a week of the time I spend working on the costume. Adding details is to the costume could conjure questions about how I should add something, or how to add color or shading to a specific part of the costume (ASK QUESTIONS). This should take up to an hour a week. The knowledge I gain from this critical thinking can help lead me to a better finished design (DISCOVER NEW TECHNIQUES TO GAIN KNOWLEDGE). This will take the entire time, and conglomerate from the experience as a whole.

EXPLORE A NEW CREATIVE COMPETENCY/MEDIUM OR SEEK NEW WAYS TO ENGAGE AN EXISTING COMPETENCY/MEDIUM.

Although I have created costumes before, I have never set out with such a high expectancy level before. I plan on going above and beyond to make the costume at the highest level of outward appearance and functionality that it can be (SEEK NEW WAYS TO ENGAGE AN EXISTING...). This will include the creation of the entire project, and so the duration would be four months. I will, during the course of this experience, develop new skills that I can utilize in future projects. Improved dexterity, concentration, and knowledge of tools used are some examples of things that will improve over the total period of time. I also plan on sketching my costume before I engage in the activities required to make it. I have never done this before, but I believe it will improve the process significantly by providing a form of my costume that I can readily access when dealing with troubles (EXPLORE A NEW CREATIVE...). This should take up (at the most) the first week of the process.

UNDERSTAND AND OPTIMIZE THE USE OF PEOPLE, TECHNOLOGY, PHYSICAL RESOURCES OR COMMUNITY IN A CREATIVE PROCESS.

Everything that I do to create this costume is going to exceed what is capable of being done with just my hands. Different things will have to be introduced to me and I will have to become proficient enough to use them efficiently on my project (TOOLS). This could take anywhere from two to five hours a week depending on how hard the technique is to master. Different things around my house, at the store or that can be found in nature may be utilized (PHYSICAL RESOURCES). Collecting these items will not be included in the time allotment, and will be done with my own money (if applicable) and time. Also, for sections of the costume making where I will need more than two hands- or must wear the apparatus I am working on to alter or add to it- I will ask one or more of my family members to help me (PEOPLE). This should take up about one or two hours a week.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES CONNECTED TO THE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Cosplay Basics: A Beginner's Guide to the Art of Costume Play
by Yuki Takasou

This book has tips and tricks for making your own cosplays, wearing wigs and makeup, and attending events in costume. This informational guide will help me better understand how to prepare for a convention and how to get the most out of the costume I will have made, as well as techniques I can choose from to build it in the first place. I think it would be a good idea to read the book before I start making my costume so I can reference it during the creative process, and also so I have a better idea of what to expect from an outing in my costume.

ON-GOING REFLECTION

My method for documenting my progress and feelings toward the costume making process is to film myself any time I work on it. Editing techniques, such as time-lapsing the film during tedious tasks or skipping repetitive sections will help cut down on time. These will be utilized when I upload the videos to Facebook. I will also do a reflection segment every week where I will answer the following questions:

What new techniques have I utilized?

What obstacles have I encountered?

What overall feelings about the product so far do I have?

What would I have done differently this week?

How does the costume look at this moment?

I will also film myself going to the convention and interviewing/conversing with other cosplayers. What I will discuss with them is located below in the “SHARING YOUR LEARNING” section.

SHARING YOUR LEARNING

I plan on posting all of my reflections both on <www.youtube.com> and on my learning portfolio so the general public will have access to them. People who search for me directly will then have access to my reflection and can find out more about me in that way. In addition to this I plan on wearing my costume to a convention where I will ask people I meet to exchange costume-making stories with me. This will provide some people (who also make costumes) with some information about how I did things while also gathering potentially new information from them. I chose this audience because it is clear that they have a passion for cosplay and would know more, and be willing to discuss more about the topic. I aim to talk to 10-25 people, and I will provide any additional things that I have learned in my final reflection video.

BUDGET (NOT APPLICABLE)