
René Capella

Seattle, WA | 937-718-7997 | rene2024@uw.edu | [LinkedIn](#)

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Now a PhD researcher in Human-Centered Design & Engineering, I combine industry leadership, software engineering, and product management experience with academic research to design and implement technological futures.

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD), Human-Centered Design & Engineering
University of Washington, Seattle

Master of Research (MRes), Human-Centered Design & Engineering
University of Washington, Seattle

Bachelor of Science (BS), Human-Centered Design & Engineering
University of Washington, Seattle
Minor: Digital Arts & Experimental Media (DXArts)

Professional Certificate, Project Management
North Seattle College, Seattle, Washington

AWARDS AND HONORS

Award of Excellence - College of Engineering, HCDE
President's Award Finalist 2024
Martin Honors Scholar
Seattle Foundations Scholar
Top Scholar - HCDE
HCDE DEI Scholarship Recipient
HCDE Alumni Association Recipient

SKILLS

Research Skills: User Experience Research, Usability Studies, Qualitative Research, Quantitative Research, Statistics, Academic Publication, Thematic Analysis, Coding, Experimental Methods, Design and Engineering Theory, Discursive Design, Interviews, Surveys

Design Skills: Figma, Miro, Wireframing, Prototyping, User Interface Design, User Experience Design

Technical Skills: Frontend Development, Backend Development, DevOps, Full Stack Development, System Architecture, Python, Java, R, Ruby

Leadership Skills: Cross-Functional Team Leadership, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Co-Design, Agile Project Management, Sprint Planning, Product Roadmapping, Waterfall Methodology

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Design Research - Research Assistant - Dr. Tyler Fox
University of Washington
December 2024 - present

- Coding qualitative data for design outcomes resulting in coding 20 week's worth of 12 individual's work
- Leading group affinity diagramming for thematic analysis resulting in insights for actionable research and practical application in industry
- Leading Direct Research Group sessions focused on reflection on design competencies with AI assistance

-
- Co-Designed research following design graduate students experience of ambiguity during ckapstone projects
 - Conducted 12 interviews
 - Co-Authored *Learning to Stay With Uncertainty: Ambiguity and Negative Capability in Design Education*

Design Research - Research Assistant - Dr. Cindy Atman

University of Washington

August 2024 - December 2024

- Investigated ambiguity in design questioning behavior leading to the coding of 6 individual's 3-hour verbal protocols
- Analyzed expert design processes leading to a paper with two case studies of engineering experts for the use of teaching engineering and design to students

Discursive Design Research

University of Washington

July 2024 - present

- Developing a series of design artifacts resulting in the critical analysis of design theory through making
- Creating a design program intended to continue the research through other artifacts

KidsTeam Research

University of Washington

Summer 2022 - Winter 2023

- Led co-design sessions with youth participants
- Researched emerging technology accessibility
- Developed inclusive design prototypes

Social Media Research

University of Washington

Spring 2023

- Conducted qualitative research on misinformation
- Analyzed social media platform data
- Contributed to research methodology development

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Research Assistant

University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

August 2024 - Present

- Lead qualitative design education research examining ambiguity in design questioning
- Code and analyze student design project transcripts for question-asking patterns
- Manage Design Research Group developing RPG-based teaching tools
- Support research on design education methodologies

Teaching Assistant

University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

April 2023 - July 2024

- Designed curriculum for core design and project management courses
- Implemented learning modules on design models and conflict management
- Integrated diversity and cognitive bias concepts into course materials
- Facilitated student understanding of project management principles

Product Manager and Lead Software Engineer

DispatchBot, Seattle, Washington

September 2017 - January 2021

- Led development team for B2B SaaS enterprise transportation system

-
- Created and managed product roadmap and sprint planning
 - Conducted user research and managed client relationships
 - Implemented successful market pivot during pandemic
 - Integrated 5+ broker systems into platform
 - Managed DevOps operations and system architecture
 - Collaborated with C-level executives on strategic initiatives

Product Developer

Onehub, Seattle, Washington

July 2018 - March 2019

- Designed and implemented Microsoft Suite and Google Docs integration
- Created technical documentation reducing setup time
- Migrated company blog to AWS, reducing costs by \$7,000
- Developed internal culture program for creativity and psychological safety
- Researched and implemented content sorting features

LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE

HCDE Graduate Student Association Member

HCDE, University of Washington

August 2025 - Present

- Connected PhD interests to current GSA initiatives
- Executed 2 successful fundraising projects for holiday engagement with the community

HCDE Committee Member

HCDE, University of Washington

May 2023 - December 2024

- Contribute to departmental community initiatives
- Develop programming
- Delegate funding

Design Education Facilitator

Rainier Scholars, Seattle, Washington

October 2024 - November 2024

- Taught Human-Centered Design principles
- Focused on leadership and equity in design

Google Developer Student Club Founder and Lead

Seattle, Washington

June 2020 - January 2023

- Produced 253 technical education events
- Reached 2,000+ global participants
- Achieved highest activity rating among 180 schools
- Provided mentorship and career guidance