

1. What have you accomplished this semester as a CTL Fellow?

As a CTL fellow this Spring 2025 semester, I made much headway with my project, “The Body and/as Technology: A Gateway to Transdisciplinary Course Development.” I refined the driving research question of my project, devised a system for pursuing it, and used that research system to gather data based on my exchanges with the project’s Pratt faculty participants.

This question guided my project’s initial research: “What existing Pratt faculty expertise, course content, and course pedagogy from different departments and schools could enhance and help frame a transdisciplinary History of Art & Design approach to “the body and/as technology”?” This query combines many of my interests. It is geared toward identifying 1) current learning resources on the body and/as technology at Pratt, 2) how to put different disciplinary perspectives of this topic into dialogue to generate new insight, and 3) how my discipline and department of history of art and design can distinctively contribute to this effort. I use the phrase the body and/as technology to signal the body’s relationship to technology, but in a way that leaves open-ended whether the body and technology are separate interacting entities or, integral extensions of each other. Interested in participants’ interpretation of the body and/as technology, I simply told them that this phrase refers to the body’s relationship to technology in a deliberately broad sense. When this phrase comes up in our exchanges, they should respond to it however it applies to them.

After pinning down my research question, I designed a system of research tools for collecting data from fellow faculty whose Pratt courses address the body and/as technology. I also arranged to engage five faculty participants through a combination of different types of exchange: class observation, follow-up interview, pre-interview survey, and related documentation sharing (such as syllabi). My research tools for collecting data from these exchanges with participants include: a document of prompts for me to complete in response to each participant’s class I observe, a list of follow-up interview questions for each participant, and a pre-interview survey that participants can fill out before our interview conversation to help make my questions for them more targeted. I also made a personal file folder system (that only I can access) for collecting relevant documentation shared by participants along with all records generated by my research tools.

2. What did you learn, what are your important takeaways so far?

I have learned a lot from my project research, so will focus here on the few takeaways that I can articulate at this point:

- i. My project focused on Pratt faculty and their courses has revealed the importance of considering how Pratt students use both to forge transdisciplinary learning pathways pertaining to the body and/as technology. Many students already do this in ways that range from required (by their degree programs), to elected but expected, to elected, unexpected but meaningful (e.g., the Phenomenology philosophy course’s popularity among Architecture students, given their interest in the human body’s experience in/of space).

- ii. My exchanges with participants have reinforced and refined my sense of what history of art and design (HAD) perspectives can contribute to most other disciplinary studies of the body and/as technology: historical and cultural contextualization of concepts, perceptions, and visual expression/production pertaining to the body and/as technology. The HAD method of drawing on examples of how artists and designers engage a topic, here, the body and/as technology, could reinforce various insights about this topic raised in non-HAD courses. Moreover, exploring art/design examples can inspire students with strategies for exploring the body and/as technology while also raising critical dilemmas around working with this topic.
- iii. A class (even those dedicated to thinking and ideas/theories) and its members can enact and embody their learning. What role does technology play or not in this?
- iv. Instructors variously perform their own bodies through space and movement (both physically and digitally) while teaching.
- v. Students training for careers in art and design constantly need to think about how to address the human body even when it is not present or represented to convey stories about/ through their work. Along with gaining a facility for using the human body (via re/presentation or implication) for storytelling when showcasing their art/design work in general, students must often navigate how to do such storytelling in digital space (e.g., for social media, advertising, and online/ digital portfolios or the equivalent in their field).
- vi. The courses that I have visited so far focus on ideas/discourse about the body and/as technology stemming from North America and Europe while emphasizing diverse and marginalized positions therein. Though many of the ideas have wide application beyond these grounding cultural contexts, my project should more intentionally aim to engage perspectives of the body and/as technology rooted in other cultural contexts.

3. Do you feel like you accomplished the goals you've set for yourself? Please explain.

Yes. I have followed through on the five main tasks that I outlined for the Spring 2025 portion of my CTL project plan from February 2025. Admittedly, I should polish my notes from one class observation and one interview, but otherwise I am on track. Perhaps most importantly, from a personal standpoint, my exchanges with participants have been thought-provoking and inspiring.

4. How will your project continue, evolve or change in the next semester?

My initial plan for June 2025 through December 2025, was to extend my data collection with three or so new faculty participants, coding and analyzing all data collected since Fall 2025, and devising ways to narrate my findings for both the Spotlight and Final Report. Potential new faculty participants I had in mind included an Interior Design instructor whose personal design practice emphasizes the body and/as technology, the instructor of SS-326P The Human Body in Science, a Dance Movement Therapy instructor, and the instructor of PIC-349 Buddhism & Creative Practices. These potential choices speak to my interest in gathering more data about

faculty practices and coursework that engage the body and/technology through functional, physical design, histories of science, embodied movement, and non-Western belief systems.

My plans have recently changed, however, because I recently learned that I will be taking leave for the 2025-26 academic year for a postdoctoral fellowship then. It seems the Provost's Office and SLAS Dean's Office will permit me to complete my project if I finish the work before my postdoctoral fellowship starts on September 1, 2025. Since my project has always been oriented toward depth/quality over breadth/ quantity (when it comes to exchange with faculty participants and interpreting the resulting data), I intend to focus my efforts between June 1 and August 31, 2025 on analyzing and framing data collected (though I may gather some data from exchange with one new faculty participant from Dance Movement Therapy, given that program's summer class schedule). I will also conduct some literature-based research to bolster my narration of the project's findings and their implications.

5. Also include your mid-year evaluation data if you have it (see next page)

6. Please list the number of people you reached out to, communicated with, especially those who attended your events (full name, title, date of event, title of event)

I have had exchanges with 5 project faculty participants. Below are the departments of the classes I observed.

- i. Social Science and Cultural Studies,
- ii. Digital Arts & Animation
- iii. Humanities & Media Studies (2 different classes from this department taught by two different faculty participants)
- iv. Fashion Design

I have also been in touch with the coordinator of the Transdisciplinary Discourse on the Body Faculty Learning Community (FLC), Ashley Bales (Math & Science) to discuss how my project work can contribute to the FLC.

7. Number of students your project reached (if applicable)

N/A

8. Number of interviews, number of meetings, events, resources (if applicable)

- 5 class observations (for class periods of 2 hours and 50 minutes or more)
- 1 interview conducted and 3 scheduled before the end of May 2025 (I offered to make these interviews brief, as short as 15-20 minutes, but when I have sensed willingness to stretch the conversation longer, I have let the interview last for an hour and can easily imagine this happening with the remaining interviews slated through May).

9. Data on faculty or student feedback regarding your project (survey, written anecdotes, etc.)

I have collected data in the form of:

- Lengthy notes on class observations through my template of prompts for them
- Notes and a video recording of my interview with faculty participant
- Pre-interview survey (available but not yet used data form) –participants have preferred to extend the length of the interview to address the pre-interview survey questions rather than answer those questions via the survey itself

10. Pictures, handouts, posters, supplemental materials

- Project relevant syllabi and course texts that faculty participants volunteered to send me