Unsilence (www.unsilence.org) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational organization. Through storytelling, the arts, and game design, we unsilence hidden injustice. It is our intention for Unsilence Lab at Northwestern University to serve as an authentic space for the research and design of dynamic, highly-interactive Unsilence learning experiences.

Course code: SESP 351

Quarter: Fall 2018

Where: Annenberg Hall, Room G02, School of Education and Social Policy

When: Thursdays 2.00pm - 3.20pm and other times, as needed

Expectations: 10 hours of work, per week

Field Trip:
Evanston Games and Café
1610 Maple Avenue
Evanston, IL 60201
(Field trip details to be confirmed)

Emerging and Authentic Learning: It is a goal of Unsilence Lab for us to create and sustain, together, a research and design experience that is driven by our real needs and by authentic learning. In light of this, this syllabus is not yet complete. While the first weeks are more fully developed, the weeks later in the quarter are represented by sketches of our plans and hopes. As design projects and questions emerge, specific readings, assignments, reports, and other tasks will be added to this document. Therefore, please always check that you are looking at the latest version of this syllabus. We are a community and so all conversations and all constructive feedback are always welcome.

Course Grades: While grades will not be assigned throughout the quarter, final course grades for Unsilence Lab will be based on: attendance and participation at weekly lab sessions; the completion of assigned tasks and reports; professionalism, effort, and adherence to deadlines; communication and a commitment to teamwork; and the quality of your work product.
Instructor:
Danny M. Cohen, PhD is a learning scientist, fiction writer, and educator, with a background in youth work, organizational management, informal education, and youth leadership. An associate professor of instruction at the School of Education and Social Policy and The Crown Family Center for Jewish and Israel Studies at Northwestern University, he specializes in collective memories and the design of Holocaust, genocide, and human rights education. A 2013 faculty fellow of the Auschwitz Jewish Center, Danny sits on the editorial advisory board of the British journal The Holocaust in History and Memory. He is a Governor-appointed Commissioner of the Illinois Holocaust and Genocide Commission and he designed and facilitated the pedagogical track of the docent training program at the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center. In addition to authoring academic articles on Holocaust and human rights education, Danny is a human rights fiction writer and the founder and creative director of Unsilence (www.unsilence.org), an educational nonprofit addressing marginalized narratives of injustice. His debut novel, Train, was released in January 2015 and was selected as the inaugural text of the national Museum Teacher Fellows book club of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Originally from London, Danny lives in Chicago with his husband and their daughter. Email: dannymcohen@u.northwestern.edu

Academic Integrity: Students in this course are required to comply with the policies found in the booklet, “Academic Integrity at Northwestern University: A Basic guide.” All papers submitted for credit in this course must be submitted electronically unless otherwise instructed by the professor. Your written work may be tested for plagiarized content. For details regarding academic integrity at Northwestern or to download the guide, visit https://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academic-integrity/index.html

Accessible NU: Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with AccessibleNU (847-467-5530) and provide professors with an accommodation notification from AccessibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

Support: When delving into any content about injustice and violence, all emotional responses – including numbness – are normal. Be aware that course content may trigger personal issues for you or your classmates. Please be aware that what you say and write can affect others. When you write, and when you speak, please always try to be respectful and kind. Also, please know that NU’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can provide you support and guidance with personal issues you might have. Visit: http://www.northwestern.edu/counseling/ NU’s Center for Awareness, Response, and Education (CARE) is a great resource, too. CARE provides “information, advice, crisis counseling, support, advocacy, referrals and education about sexual violence (including sexual assault, rape, intimate partner violence and stalking) as well as consent, healthy relationships and healthy sexuality to the Northwestern University community.” Visit: http://www.northwestern.edu/care/ Please note that if we read anything within a written assignment – or hear anything during class – of concern, we may need to follow up appropriately.
Week 1
UNSILENCE & HUMAN RIGHTS

Learning Goals for Week 1:

1. Unsilence Lab students will be able to explain the Unsilence Framework and how Unsilence Features fit into the framework.

2. Unsilence Lab students will be able to draw connections between hidden injustice and human rights.

3. Unsilence Lab students will begin to become familiar with key Unsilence Features.

4. Unsilence Lab students will be oriented to and able to use ASANA and Google Drive.

Tasks for Week 1:

1. Complete any necessary paperwork for Unsilence Lab participation.

2. Log into ASANA and ensure that everything works.

3. Experience Metal Detector and A Tour Guide at Auschwitz and, before looking at the drop-down menus, take notes on the personal, cultural, and institutional silencing in each story. Then check your answers against the drop-downs. Bring in your notes to go over next week.

4. Read The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and The Rome Statute’s Crimes Against Humanity. Take notes on any human rights that surprise you or are thought-provoking and bring them to next week’s lab.

5. Explore the Unsilence Framework. Take notes on your questions and thoughts and bring them to next week’s lab.

Week 2

GAME DESIGN

Learning Goals for Week 2:

1. Unsilence Lab students will begin to explore and consider the gaps and challenges that come along with the design of Unsilence interactive experiences and “serious games” in general.

2. Unsilence Lab students will reflect on why games can support social justice learning.

Tasks for Week 2:

1. Explore the identiT Map in-depth. Write up a gap analysis (bullet points are fine) of everything and anything you perceive to be missing from identiT as a learning track about transgender experiences. This includes problems and gaps with the map, as well as limitations of using such a map in general. What other gaps do we need to fill in this learning track? What other features and stories would help fill these gaps?

2. Explore Tomorrow in-depth. Write up a gap analysis (bullet points are fine) of everything and anything you perceive to be missing from Home Again as a learning track about mental health. This includes problems and gaps, as well as limitations of using such a feature in general. What other gaps do we need to fill in this learning track? What other features and stories would help fill these gaps?

3. Look back at your gap analysis for both identiT and Tomorrow (Home Again) and identify how these issues relate to human rights (e.g., access to medical care). Cite specific human rights laws and norms when possible (beyond UDHR).

4. REPORT: Conduct research and build an argument to address the question: How can games support social justice learning? (Use APA Style)
Week 3

HIDDEN VOICES

Learning Goals for Week 3:

1. Unsilence Lab students will explore why and how unsilencing necessitates the lifting of marginalized voices.

2. Unsilence Lab students will be able to explain the relationships between injustice, suffering, trauma, silence, resilience, resistance, power, and other concepts inherent within stories of hidden injustice.

3. Unsilence Lab students will be able to create templates (e.g., interview protocols) for the purposes of collecting testimonies.

Tasks for Week 3:

1. With the support of the Unsilence Team, Unsilence Lab students will identify people to be interviewed, with the goal of collecting testimonies for creating new features for identiT and Home Again.

2. As a group, Unsilence Lab students will create a semi-structured interview protocol for the collection of testimonies (to approved by the Unsilence Team).

Plan for Weeks 4 and 5

LIFTING VOICES

1. Arrange and conduct interviews.

2. Transcribe interviews.

3. REPORT: Conduct research and build an argument to address the question: What are the psychological, emotional, and tangible benefits of unsilencing? (Use APA Style)
Plan for Week 6

DESIGN INSPIRATION

1. Review transcripts and discuss content.
2. Begin to brainstorm proposals for new Unsilence features.

Plan for Week 7

PROJECT PROPOSALS

1. At this point, Unsilence Lab will split into two teams (Home Again and identiT).
2. Each team will write a proposal for a new Unsilence feature, to include: Gap analysis; Source materials; Interviews; Concept design; Learning goals and rationale; Concept design; If this is a “big idea,” what portion of it can be completed in the last two weeks of the quarter?

Plan for Weeks 8, 9 & 10

DESIGN

1. The identiT team and the Home Again team will find time to work together outside of lab time to create their new features.
2. Lab sessions will be used to present progress and receive feedback from the other team.

Plan for Week 11

PRESENTATIONS & REPORTS

1. Unsilence Lab students will present their Unsilence feature designs.
2. Unsilence Lab students will submit Final Report write-ups, to include: Developed learning goals; Gaps and limitations for implementation; Audience report; Accompanying lesson plans; Plans for sustainability and replicability, and so on.