# Mapping migration paths through *the dwindling* institutional **diversity** *in Florida*

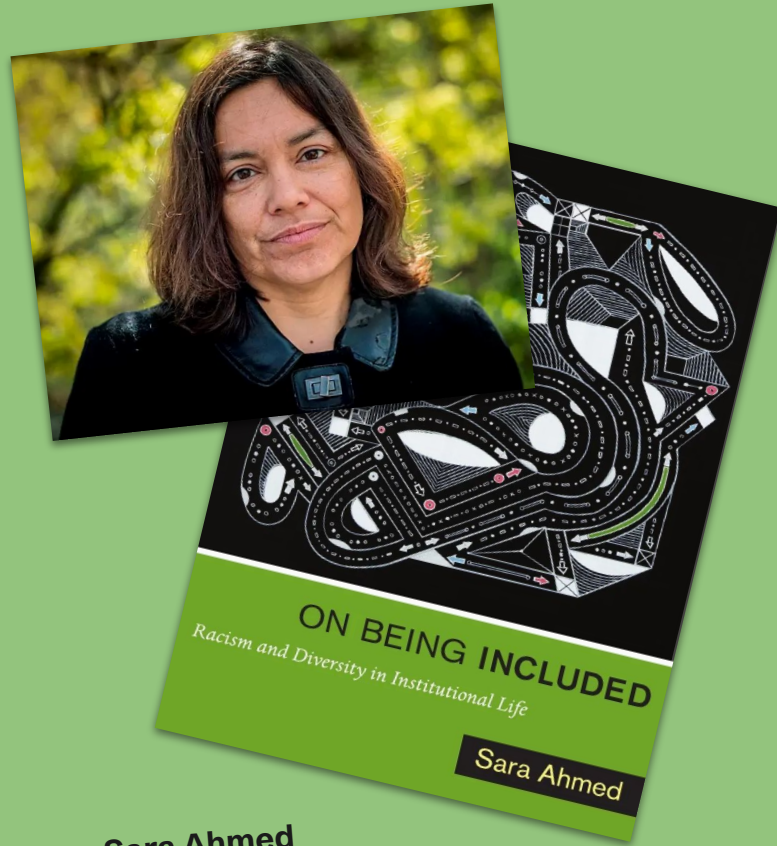*ICDHS14 Cultures of Design, New Delhi, 2025*

**Hien L. D. Phan**
Boise State University
hienphan@boisestate.edu
pldh.page

**Frederick M. C. van Amstel**
Universidade Tecnológica Federal do Paraná
vanamstel@utfpr.edu.br
fredvanamstel.com

Sara Ahmed

Institutional diversity is a contradiction: **racial, social, cultural, sexual, and gender diversity** are *celebrated* (2012, p.52-53) and *co-opting* (2012, p.24) by the institution's goals, statements, and stable practices.

Ahmed, S. (2012). *On being included: Racism and diversity in institutional life*. Duke University Press.

**Hien L. D. Phan**
A Vietnamese immigrant (she/her)

Previous graduate student at *the Graduate program in Design and Visual Communications* MFA/MXD
University of Florida, until May 2025

**Frederick M. C. van Amstel**
A Dutch-Brazilian (he/him)

Previous Associate Professor and Director of *the Graduate program in Design and Visual Communications* MFA/MXD
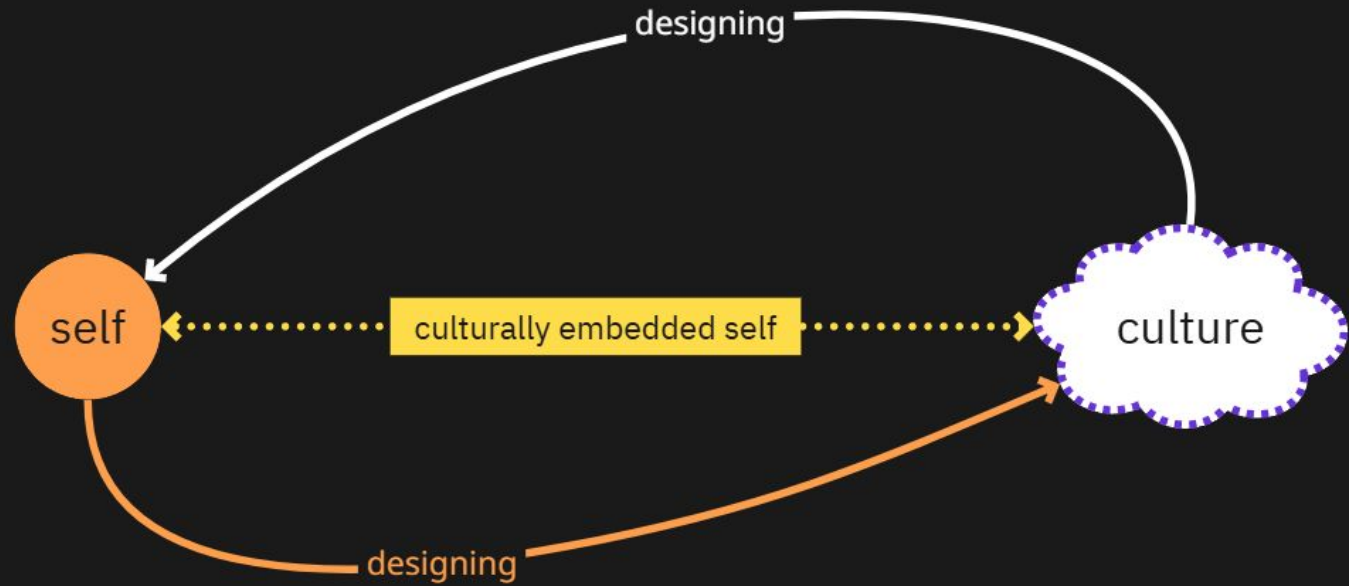University of Florida, until May 2025

The authors' positionalities

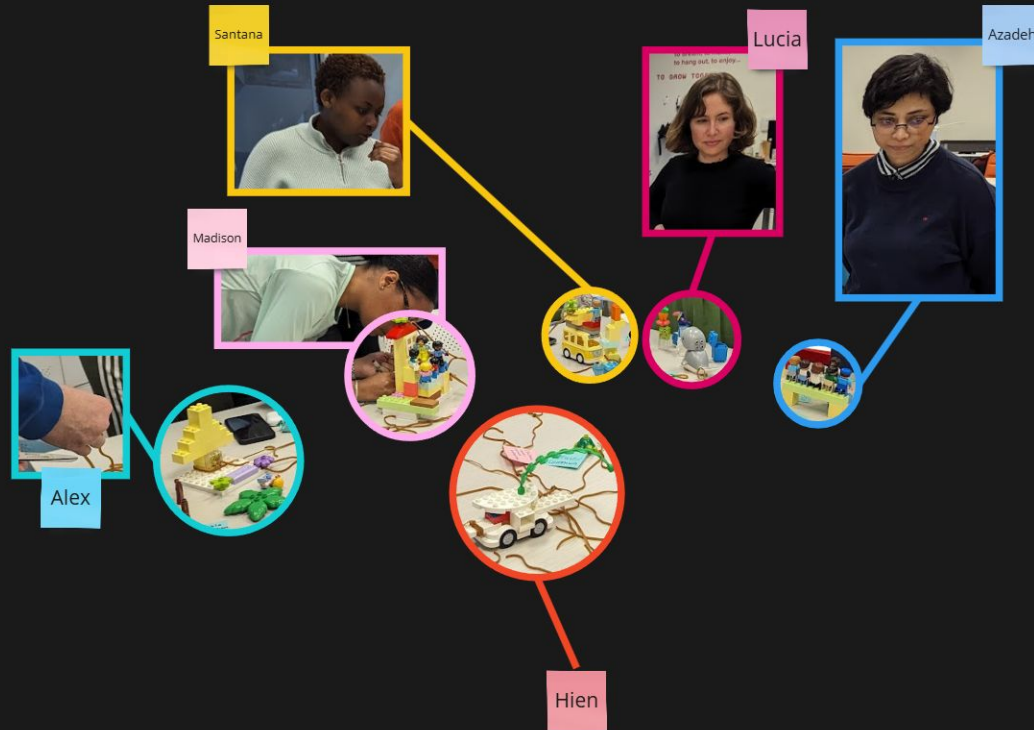Locating **the Graduate program MFA/MXD** (Florida, USA) against the global scale

de F. Afonso, E. Z., & Taylor, P. C. (2009). **Critical autoethnographic inquiry for culture-sensitive professional development.** Reflective Practice, 10(2), 273-283.
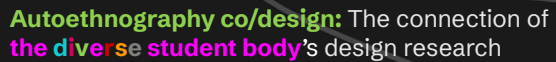
**The diverse student body**'s first time with **Lego Serious Play**, facilitated by the second author

Santana

Madison

Lucia

Azadeh

Alex

Hien

**Autoethnography: The diverse student body** and Lego
Serious Plays as **metaphors** of design research

Santana

Lucia

Azadeh

Madison

Alex

Hien

**Autoethnography co/design:** The connection of **the diverse student body**'s design research

**Local newspapers** of the campus town
in Gainesville, Florida, USA



**Low-tech, metaphorical codesign toolkits**, such as Lego
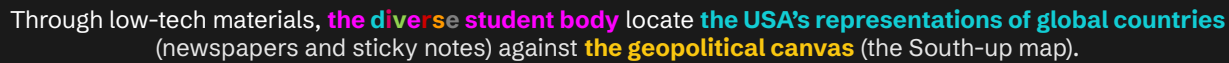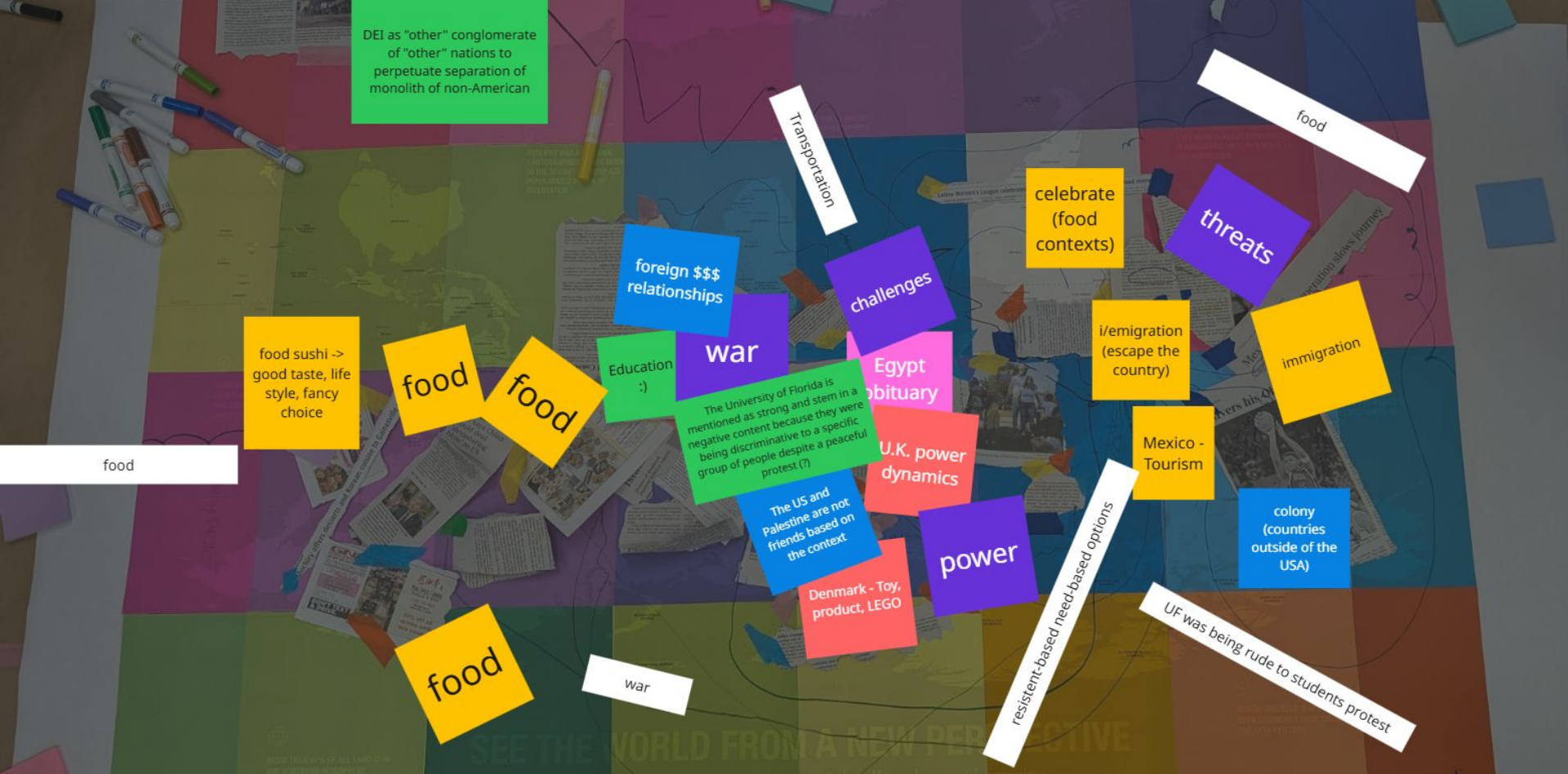Serious Play animals, color labels, and the South-up world map

Through **autoethnographic co/design**, how can we, as **the diverse student body**, map our migrations against **the geopolitical canvas**?

The autoethnographic co/design method, **the diverse student body** positioned ourselves against **the geopolitical canvas**, facilitated by the authors

Through low-tech materials, **the diverse student body** locate **the USA's representations of global countries** (newspapers and sticky notes) against **the geopolitical canvas** (the South-up map).

Through the authors' data digitization, the **USA's representations of global countries** (colored squares) and **geopolitical connections** (white rectangles) are color coded.

The authors' data analysis, where **the diverse student body's immigration** (color labels) are contextualized by **the geopolitical canvas** (the annotated South-up map).

*Design research findings*

Through **autoethnographic co/design**, **institutional diversity** is critiqued for its superficial inclusivity, stereotypical misrepresentation, and perpetuated oppression in **the USA neoliberal multiculturalism**.

Through **autoethnographic co/design**, **the diverse student body** was decolonizing the colonialist, racist, and oppressive institution through low-tech materials and dialogues.

# *Let's discuss.*

**Hien L. D. Phan**
Boise State University
hienphan@boisestate.edu
pldh.page

**Frederick M. C. van Amstel**
Universidade Tecnológica Federal do Paraná
vanamstel@utfpr.edu.br
fredvanamstel.com