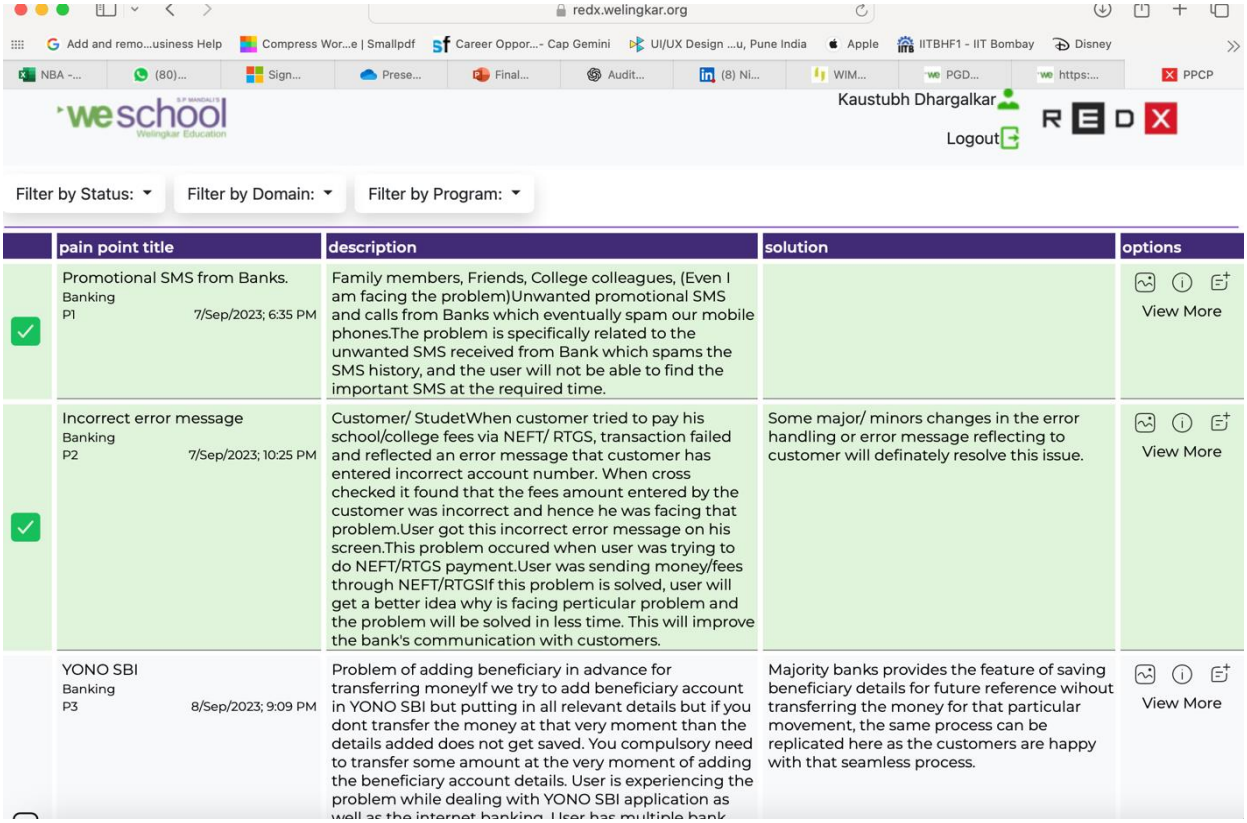
Innovative Pedagogies deployed in PGDM-Business Design

1.

Type of Pedagogy	Action Learning
Focus	Collection of consumer pain points and idea generation
Course(s)	Could be used in any course in any semester This pedagogy was used in the following batches and courses Tools For Innovation (AY 2022-23, AY 2023-24, AY 2024-25)
Objective	The purpose of this pedagogy is for the student to understand user pain points are a great source to bring about innovation
Description	Every week, students are assigned a specific industry sector. They are supposed to interact with consumers of products in that sector and understand what consumers are complaining about and what changes do they seek. Students then post the observations on a dedicated internal platform, https://redx.welingkar.org/PPCP/index.html The faculty has admin rights to this portal. Each uploaded observation has the feature of being upvoted. Peers in the class can upvote/like each other's observations depending on the intensity of the pain point from their own perspective. The observation/pain point that gets the maximum upvote then goes forward to the next stage, i.e. idea generation and solutioning.
Outcome	Students get to work on real consumer problems. They get to validate their findings through a peers. Only those pain points that others have upvoted in large numbers are taken forward to ideation and solutioning. This gives the students a good idea about creating product-market fit.

Following is a screenshot of the platform



2.

Type of Pedagogy	Empathy Projects
Focus	Deep dive into the challenges of a specific target segment.
Course(s)	Could be used in any course that deals with consumer understanding This pedagogy was used in the following course 1. Tools for Innovation (AY 2022-23) 2. Tools for Innovation (AY 2023-24) 3. Tools for Innovation (AY 2024-25)
Objective	To gain a deep insight into the lives of the target segment identified
Description	Students are assigned specific target segments e.g., visually challenged college students, coolies, construction workers in the city of Mumbai etc. The target segments are specifically chosen to ensure that students get an understanding of people whom they have normally not interacted with. They are supposed to interact deeply with individuals from the target segment for a period of 15 days. Students are expected to record their

	observations through video shoots/audio recordings/photographs. After having collected their observations the students go through a structured process of idea generation and solutioning.

3.

Type of Pedagogy	Alumni Mentoring Initiative (AMI)
Focus	Depending on the Project Sponsor/Organization
Objective	The Alumni Mentoring Initiative was launched with the goal of creating a supportive bridge between current students and alumni of the program. The idea was to provide students with a trusted space where they could seek advice, gain clarity about their academic journey, and explore career paths through the real-life experiences of alumni. By doing this, the initiative aimed to enrich students' understanding of how their classroom learning could be applied in the professional world, while also building a strong, active network of alumni who continue to engage with the institution.
Description	The initiative followed a thoughtful and structured approach. Students were first encouraged to reflect on and share their preferred career paths or sectors of interest. Based on these preferences, they were grouped accordingly. The department then reached out to alumni whose professional journeys aligned with these student interests and who were open to volunteering their time and insights. A total of 10 alumni mentors were selected, with each one assigned to a small group of up to 7 students. To keep things smooth and organized, each group had a student SPOC (Single

	Point of Contact) who coordinated with the mentor and peers, set up monthly online meetings, and documented key takeaways from the discussions. There was also room for one-on-one interactions based onmutual interest and the alumnus' availability. Throughout the process, students were reminded to maintain professionalism, and feedback from alumni was shared with faculty to keep them informed about student progress and engagement.
Outcome	The results of the initiative have been both encouraging and meaningful. Students reported feeling more confident and better informed when it came to choosing electives, preparing for job interviews, and understanding what companies expect from fresh talent. The guidance helped them see how their classroom learning connects to real-world challenges and decision-making. On the other side, alumni appreciated the opportunity to give back and stay connected with the program. Their involvement brought fresh insights and helped the department gather valuable feedback on current academic and professional trends. Overall, the initiative helped students sharpen their strategic thinking, become more industry-ready, and build a sense of direction — while also strengthening the bond between alumni and the institution.
Reflective Critique	The Alumni Mentoring Initiative stands out as a genuinely student-focused effort. It's heartening to see how it encourages meaningful conversations that go beyond textbook learning, giving students access to lived experiences and honest advice. The small group size and open-ended structure made it feel personal and approachable, which is often key to effective mentoring. However, as the program grows, there may be a need to involve more alumni to maintain the quality of interactions. Formalizing aspects like one-on-one sessions or creating a mentorship journal could help capture outcomes more clearly. Also, while student coordination was effective, a bit more structured involvement from faculty could help align mentoring conversations more closely with the evolving curriculum and learning goals. In essence, the initiative has created a much-needed space for guidance and reflection, helping students find direction and confidence. With a few thoughtful additions, it has the potential to become a long-term pillar of the learning experience.

4.

Type of Pedagogy	Iterative Prototyping for Solution Development and User-Centric Testing
Focus	Depending on the Project Sponsor/Organization
Course(s)	
Objective	The primary objective of this initiative was to inculcate iterative design thinking among students by encouraging them to prototype, test, and refine solutions based on user feedback. Through a structured two-stage prototyping assignment, the course aimed to deepen students' understanding of user needs, enhance solution accuracy, and foster an evidence-based improvement mindset.
Description	The methodology adopted followed a structured, iterative learning framework, consisting of two core assignments that placed user testing and continuous refinement at the center of the learning process: - Assignment 1: Students developed the first iteration of a prototype addressing a problem identified during the Tools for Innovation course. This version underwent user testing where students defined relevant tasks and captured feedback using clearly stated performance metrics. - Assignment 2: Based on feedback and measured insights from the first test, students created a second iteration. They then repeated the testing process to validate improvements and gather further user insights. Select students progressed to a third version of the prototype, highlighting the initiative's open-ended nature. A key element of this initiative was the use of well-defined rubrics—for both internal and external evaluations—that actively encouraged iterative prototyping. These rubrics did not just reward the quality of a prototype but also placed high value on the number of iterations, the depth of user testing, and the ability to analyze and apply feedback. Students were thus incentivized to move beyond one-off solutions and embrace a cycle of testing, critique, and revision. By embedding iteration into the grading structure itself, the rubrics shifted student focus from completion to continuous improvement and learning-by-doing.

	This methodology not only ensured alignment with course learning outcomes but also mirrored real-world product development practices, where iteration and user feedback are central to innovation.
Outcome	The initiative led to tangible improvements in students' ability to: - Select and apply appropriate prototyping techniques - Define meaningful user tasks and evaluation metrics - Interpret feedback analytically and apply it to their design - Embrace failure and iteration as a part of the innovation process Some student teams progressed to a third prototype iteration, demonstrating maturity in user understanding and product refinement achieving a better product-market fit. The multi-stage nature of the assignments built a mindset of continuous improvement, a core principle in both design thinking and entrepreneurship.
Reflective CRITIQUE	This initiative marked a shift from linear project execution to a more cyclical, feedback-driven process. By placing prototyping and user testing at the center, students moved from assumption-based to evidence-based solution development. The rigor of the rubric ensured that learning outcomes were objectively assessed, while flexibility in assignments allowed for creativity. However, a few areas need further refinement: - Some students struggled with identifying meaningful metrics and conducting insightful analysis - Not all student teams went beyond two iterations, indicating the need for more encouragement or structured support - More focus could be given to integrating multi-method prototyping techniques in early stages Overall, the initiative successfully aligned academic assignments with industry-relevant skills in product development, fostering a deeper, user-centered approach to problem-solving.

5.

Type of Pedagogy	**Persona-Driven Redesign Simulation**
Focus	Redesign of physical service environments using customer personas to build skills in customer-centric service design.
Course(s)	Service Design and Management – Trimester 3
Objective	To help students internalize the value of service environment design by stepping into the shoes of diverse customer personas. Students learn to: • Identify customer pain points • Evaluate current service environments • Apply creative thinking to propose practical and persona-aligned redesigns This immersive activity also develops empathy, ideation, teamwork, and communication skills
Description	Each group is assigned a **unique persona** representing different customer demographics (e.g., elderly, disabled, working mother, digital native, etc.). They must: • Choose a real-world bricks-and-mortar service (e.g., clinic, post office, metro station, café) • Evaluate the existing environment from the persona's perspective • Identify environmental mismatches or discomforts • Redesign the environment using service design elements (ambient conditions, spatial layout, signs/symbols/artifacts) • Present their redesign through a short **visual presentation** (floor plan/photo mock-ups encouraged) **Instructor Role**: Facilitator and evaluator **Duration**: One 2-hour in-class session (including presentations) **Group Size**: 4–5 students **Deliverable**: Persona profile, analysis of gaps, redesigned layout, 5-minute pitch

6.

Type of Pedagogy	**Crossroads – A Collaborative Flipped Learning Gamification for Fostering Holistic Student Development**
Objective	To promote fun-based, flipped learning, team teaching and learning approach by leveraging gamification to reinforce classroom teaching of management concepts through application-oriented tasks.
Description	The class was divided into four houses, each led by a faculty mentor. “Crossroads” was a unique bidding process that ensured fair distribution of student talent across teams after assessing strengths, weakness, requirements and strategic advantage. Students were instructed to apply inductive, deductive, and abductive reasoning in a game-based format using design research, product design and development, skills gap analysis, budgeting and cost management, data analytics & visualization, leveraging open-source tools for strategic concept design and flawless execution. Faculty acted as mentors, observers and reviewers, fostering peer-led learning. Students made use of AI tools in this process of idea execution and presentation of competitive team building activities that were to be executed by student teams using available institute infrastructure.
Outcome	"Crossroads" helped students with - significant gain in confidence - ability to address academic, technological, and social pressures - class peer connections and bonding - application of theoretical concepts, people management, and strategic thinking - holistic development through integration of diverse physical, intellectual, and strategic activities in regular academics
Reflective Critique	Scope for better academic-calendar alignment, inclusion of trending activities, use of quantitative impact metrics, and deeper faculty engagement through targeted mentoring and skill-building workshops.