

# René Capella

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

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Human-Centered Design researcher and former software engineer with industry experience, specializing in creating exceptional digital experiences through iterative design and user research. Combines deep technical expertise with design thinking to craft scalable, intuitive solutions prioritizing user needs. Demonstrated success in leading collaborative teams, conducting user research, and delivering innovative solutions.

## Core Skills

Research: UX Research, Usability Studies, Interviews, Surveys  
Design & Prototyping: Figma, Miro, Wireframes, Prototyping  
Teamwork: Cross-Functional Team Leadership, DEI, Co-Design  
Project Management: Agile, Sprint Planning, Roadmaps, Waterfall  
Technical: Backend and Frontend Dev, Dev Ops  
Passion Areas: Sustainability, Inclusivity, Futures, Innovation

## Education

### PhD - *in progress*

Human-Centered Design & Engineering - present  
The University of Washington – Seattle, Washington

### Bachelor's of Science

Human-Centered Design & Engineering, Minor: Anthropology & DXArts - Spring 2024  
The University of Washington – Seattle, Washington

### Professional Certificate

Project Management  
North Seattle College – Seattle, Washington - Autumn 2019- Spring 2020

## Awards

Award of Excellence - College of Engineering, HCDE  
Martin Honors Scholar  
Seattle Foundations Scholar  
Top Scholar - HCDE  
HCDE DEI Scholarship Recipient  
HCDE Alumni Association Recipient

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## Research

### **Investigating Ambiguity in Design Questioning Behavior of Experts and Students - Present**

Carefully code and analyze 6 students' transcripts of a design project, explicitly considering the quality of question-asking as divergent or convergent and comparing this to design outcomes.

### **DRG Assistant - RPG Teaching Tool - 12/2024-06/2024**

Running a DRG to design a teaching tool for design students modeled after RPG table-top gaming

### **KidsTeam, The University of Washington, Summer 2022- Winter 2023**

Led co-design sessions with children to research and prototype emerging technology for youth, focusing on inclusivity and accessibility.

### **Negative Affect in Social Media, The University of Washington, Spring 2023**

Participating in qualitative research to establish data for analyzing mis- and disinformation on social media platforms.

## Volunteer Work

### **DEI Committee Member, HCDE, University of Washington, May 2023 – present**

### **Facilitator/Teacher, 10/2024 – 11/2024**

Rainer Scholars, Seattle, Washington

*Teaching Human-Centered Design to diverse students, focusing on leadership, equity, and innovative problem-solving.*

### **Founder, Lead, & Mentor, 06/2020 – 01/2023**

Google Developer Student Club, Seattle, Washington

*Produced 253 local and global events over nine months, teaching technical and career skills, reaching over 2000 global users, and earning the most active GDSC out of 180 schools*

## Professional Experience

### **Research Assistant 08/2024 – Present**

Dr. Atman, HCD&E, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

*Assisting the production of **qualitative design education research**, exploring generativity and the importance of creativity and ambiguity in the design process for better design outcomes.*

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## **Teaching Assistant, 04/2023 – 07/2024**

Dr. Atman, HCD&E, University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

*Designing and implementing a learner-centered core curriculum class, integrating the value of concepts of design models, conflict management, diversity, cognitive bias, project management, and perspective.*

## **Product Manager, Lead Software Engineer, 9/2017 – 01/2021**

DispatchBot, Seattle, Washington

A B2B SaaS enterprise system product in the transportation industry, this product management role involved leading a development team, creating the product roadmap, crafting sprints and user stories, prioritization, and operating DevOps. The role also included working closely with the COO and CEO, defining requirements, traveling and interviewing clients, and working with business partners to facilitate software integrations.

- Streamlined the broker interface, allowing 5+ integrations to the system
- Designed a full-market pivot of the application during the pandemic through user research, market research, and product engineering review
- Improved communication of the company by connecting teams through an iterative, cross-functional mindset, resulting in fewer grumbles and overall good feels

## **Product Developer, 07/2018 – 03/2019**

Onehub, Seattle, Washington

A SaaS cloud storage service, this role required researching and designing implementations of features for the product and building software solutions. Responsible for being cross-functional and aware of departmental needs while crafting features and solving technical problems.

- Researched and designed the integration of Microsoft Suite and Google Docs into the product
- Led research and implementation of a needed sorting feature
- Created and maintained environment set-up documentation, reducing set-up time for three employees
- Migrated the company blog from WP Engine to AWS to save \$7k in hosting costs
- Initiated an internal culture program designed to increase creativity and psychological safety