



INF385E - Information Architecture and Design

28645

Fall 2023

CLASS MEETS:

Time: 09:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Day: Thursdays

Location: UTA 1.208

Instructor: Dr. Stacey Sarris Oliver, DSc

- Pronouns: She/her
- Office hours: 10:00am – 5:00pm, Wednesdays, please request an appointment and I will send you a meeting invite with Zoom information
- Email: stacey.oliver1@austin.utexas.edu

Course Description

UNIVERSITY CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION

The theory and design of Information Architecture: models that provide structure and context for information to shape meaning, purpose, and utility toward understanding. This course is structured using both hands-on application of Information Architecture as well as theory. The hands-on applied portion of the course entails working on a real-world project from start to finish from conducting IA related research methods (audits, card sorts and tree testing) to developing roadmaps of data. Theory will be cornerstone of the course, students will learn key concepts that will be applicable regardless of the medium, a website, database, or artificial intelligence. Students present theoretical reviews; map and design; and develop novel information architectures using a variety of methods and software applications.

PRE-REQUISITES FOR THE COURSE

Graduate standing.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Information Architecture is the arrangement of information so that it is navigable, findable and understandable. Through teaching solid theory and practical application, the goal of course will give students a strong introductory foundation of Information Architecture.



1. The definition Information Architecture
2. Acquire information needs and seeking behavior knowledge
3. Understand organizational models and structures of information
4. The definition of Navigation, as well as its anatomy
5. How to conduct research (Audits, Card Sorting + Tree Testing)
6. When and how to use "Search"

How Will You Learn?

STATEMENT OF LEARNING SUCCESS

Your success in this class is important to me. We all learn differently, and everyone struggles sometimes. You are not, ever, the only one having difficulty! If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we will develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to reach out to the student resources available through UT and I am happy to connect you with a person or Center if you would like.

TEACHING MODALITY INFORMATION

"Learning Modality Type" is defined as the method of student participation in instruction. In this course, the mode will be "in person." This means the student is attending school by physically sitting in the classroom inside the school building and receiving face to face instruction. Participation includes the following:

- Readings
- In class lectures
- Discussions
- Simulations / practice exercises of methods and techniques common to Information Architecture
- Both individual and group learning projects and/or presentations

COMMUNICATION

I know most professors like you to communicate via Canvas, however I will **not** respond to those messages.

Please contact me via my UT email account: stacey.oliver1@austin.utexas.edu

You are responsible for ensuring that the primary email address you have recorded with the university is the one you will check for course communications because that is the email address that I have on record.



ASKING FOR HELP

I feel very strongly about helping you in any way possible. This means that I will make myself available as much as possible. Please email me and if I don't respond within 24 hours, please email me again- I will not be offended.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION


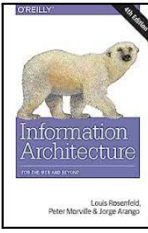

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed, and that the diversity that students bring to this class can be comfortably expressed and be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit to all students. Please come to me at any time with any concerns.

DISABILITY & ACCESS (D&A)

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability & Access (D&A). Please refer to the D&A website for more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

Course Requirements and Grading

REQUIRED MATERIALS

	<p>How to Make Sense of Any Mess: Information Architecture for Everybody</p> <p>By Abby Covert</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - provides a seven-step process for making sense of any mess. <p>Published 2014</p> <p>Publisher CreateSpace Independent Publishing</p> <p>ISBN-10 1500615994</p> <p>ISBN-13 978-1500615994</p>
	<p>Information Architecture: For the Web and Beyond 4th Edition</p> <p>by Louis Rosenfeld + Peter Morville + Jorge Arango</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provides essential concepts, methods, and techniques for digital design that have withstood the test of time. <p>Published 2015</p> <p>Publisher O'Reilly Media</p> <p>ISBN-10 1491911689</p> <p>ISBN-13 978-1491911686</p>
	<p>Everyday Information Architecture</p> <p>by Lisa Maria Martin</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shows you how to leverage the principles and practices of information architecture in order to craft more thoughtful and effective digital spaces. Learn how to analyze your site's content and structure, build clear and consistent taxonomies, and develop more strategic sitemaps <p>1st Edition</p> <p>Published 2019</p> <p>Publisher A Book Apart</p> <p>ISBN-10 193755774X</p> <p>ISBN-13 978-1937557744</p>

REQUIRED DEVICES

Access to a computer

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

Class attendance

Class attendance is a required condition of succeeding in this course. The following is an outline of how missing a class will affect your overall grade:

- One absence, no impact to grade and requires no explanation. In this case, you will be allowed to make up assignments you may have missed during this session. If you are absent on the day that your team



meets, you are responsible for providing your team with the necessary information to compensate for your absence. It is crucial to keep in communication with your team members; you are responsible for letting both me and your team know if you cannot make it to a class.

- All other excused absences (religious holidays or extenuating circumstances Due to an emergency)
 - o If absence is Due to observance of a religious holiday, notification must be given two weeks in advance. You will not be penalized for this absence, although you will still be responsible for any work you will miss on that day if applicable. Check with me for details or arrangements.
 - o If Due to an emergency
- Unexcused absence
 - o For each unexcused absence a letter grade will be deducted from your overall grade.

Class participation

Class participation is an important part of this course. To receive the full experience and to receive the full participation grade you must:

- Be prepared for class having completed all assignments and reading
- Speak up in class: Explaining and giving good debates about concepts learned
- Practice active listening
- Ask questions
- Encourage others
- Be prepared to give peer assessment in the form of feedback and opinion
- Show leadership
- Invest yourself in classroom activities
- Help others
- Most importantly, you must extend yourself beyond your comfort zone

Behavior expectations

We are all colleagues and as such there will be no tolerance for anything less than how you would behave in a professional environment. You can reference Section 11-400 of the Institutional Rules in the GIC for more details.

ASSIGNMENTS

The following table represents how you will demonstrate your learning and how we will assess the degree to which you have done so.

Assignments	Points Possible	Percent of Total Grade
1. Medium Posts (3 total): Create a medium account if you don't already have, develop 3 post that demonstrate your Information Architecture skill and knowledge	100	10%



2. Participation	100	20%
3. Semester Long Project (IA Redesign of Site): Including Audit, Cardsort, Tree Test, Recommended redesign	100	50%
4. Presentation of Semester Project	100	10%
5. Analyzation of topic	100	10%

LATE WORK AND MAKING UP MISSED WORK

All work is considered on time if it submitted prior to the start time of the class on the date it is Due. If it is late, there will be 10% deduction for every 24 hours it's late.

USE OF A CURVE

There is no curve for this course.

EXTRA CREDIT

No Extra credit opportunities in this course.

GRADE BREAKS

Grade	Cutoff
A	94%
A-	90%
B+	87%
B	84%
B-	80%
C+	77%
C	74%
C-	70%
D+	67%
D	64%
D-	60%
F	<60%

Course Outline

All instructions, assignments, readings, rubrics and essential information will be on the Canvas website at utexas.instructure.com. Check Canvas regularly. **Changes** to the schedule may be made at my discretion if circumstances require. I will announce any such changes in class and will also communicate them via a Canvas announcement. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced, and I will do my best to ensure that you are notified of changes with as much advance notice as possible.

Week	Class Topic	Out of Class Activities	Assignments Due
0		Highly encouraged that you pre-read the following: Covert, Abby: Sense of Any Mess - Chapter(s) 1, Due week 1 Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond - Chapter(s) 1, due week 1 Martin, Lisa: Everyday IA - Chapter(s) 1, due week 1	
1	Welcome to class - Class expectations - Explanation of how class will develop over the semester What is Information Architecture Assign teams Assign Project	Readings Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond - Chapter(s) 2+3, due week 2	Readings Covert, Abby: Sense of Any Mess - Chapter(s) 1 Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond - Chapter(s) 1 Martin, Lisa: Everyday IA - Chapter(s) 1
2	Lecture: Stakeholder Interviews Develop questions for client	Project Assignment - Develop questions for client - Due weeks 3+4 Readings Covert, Abby: Sense of Any Mess - Chapter(s) 2+3, due week 3 Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond - Chapter(s) 4+5, due week 3 Martin, Lisa: Everyday IA - Chapter(s) 2, due week 3	Readings Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond - Chapter(s) 2+3 Covert, Abby: Sense of Any Mess - Chapter(s) 2+3
3	Review first iteration of questions for client Lecture: Project Plans + Audits	Project Assignment - Develop project plan, due week 5 Readings Covert, Abby: Sense of Any Mess	Project Assignment: Develop questions for client (first version) Readings

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 4, due week 4 Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 6, 7, 8, 9, due week 4 Martin, Lisa: Everyday IA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 3, due week 4 	Covert, Abby: Sense of Any Mess <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 2+3 Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond (Final version) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 4+5 Martin, Lisa: Everyday IA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 2
4	Client visit Lecture: Audit	Medium Post #1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due week 6, /Sept 28th Project Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audit, due week 8 Readings Covert, Abby: Sense of Any Mess <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 5, due week 5 Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 10, due week 5 Martin, Lisa: Everyday IA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 6, due week 5 	Project Assignment Develop questions for client Readings Covert, Abby: Sense of Any Mess <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 4 Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 6, 7, 8, 9 Martin, Lisa: Everyday IA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 3
5 Sept 21th	Guest speaker: Abby Covert Lecture Card sort – How to start	Project Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Card sort, due week 8 Readings Covert, Abby: Sense of Any Mess <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 6 + 7, due week 6 Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 11, due week 6 	Project Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project plan Readings Covert, Abby: Sense of Any Mess <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 5 Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 10 Martin, Lisa: Everyday IA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 6
6 Sept 28th	Lecture: Card sort – Analyze the results	Project Assignment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Findings review, due week 8 Readings Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 12, due week 7 	Medium Post #1 Readings Covert, Abby: Sense of Any Mess <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 6 + 7 Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 11
7	Lecture	Medium Post #2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Due week 11, November 2nd Readings Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 13, due week 8 	Readings Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chapter(s) 12
8	Lecture	Project Assignment	Project Assignment

	Client check-in	- First iteration of new IA, due week 9	- Audit - Card sort - Findings review - Client check-in Morville, Peter: IA for the Web and Beyond Readings - Chapter(s) 13
9	Lecture: Tree test	Project Assignment - Tree test, due week 11	Client check in Project Assignment - First iteration of new IA
10	Lecture Project check in		Project Assignment - Project check in
11 November 2 nd	Lecture Project check in	Project Assignment - Visual design, due week 12	Medium Post #2 Project Assignment - Tree test - Project check in
12	Guest speaker Lecture: Presentation Project check in	Project Assignment - Presentation, due week 13	Project Assignment - Visual design - Project check in
13	Final presentations	Medium Post #3 - Due week 15, November 30th	
14	Thanksgiving	No Class	
15 November 30th	Final presentations		Medium Post #3 Project Assignment - Presentation

Course Policies and Disclosures

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY EXPECTATIONS

Students who violate University rules on academic misconduct are subject to the student conduct process and potential disciplinary action. A student found responsible for academic misconduct may be assigned both a status sanction and a grade impact for the course. The grade impact could range from a zero on the assignment in question up to a failing grade in the course. A status sanction can range from probation, deferred suspension and/or dismissal from the University. To learn more about the academic integrity standards, tips for avoiding a potential academic misconduct violation and the overall conduct process, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.



CONFIDENTIALITY OF CLASS RECORDING'S

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

GETTING HELP WITH TECHNOLOGY

Students needing help with technology in this course should contact the [ITS Service Desk](#).

CONTENT WARNING

Our classroom provides an open space for the critical and civil exchange of ideas. Some readings and other content in this course will include topics that some students may find offensive and/or traumatizing. I'll aim to forewarn students about potentially disturbing content and I ask all students to help to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and sensitivity.

BASIC NEEDS SECURITY

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to visit UT Outpost for support. UT Outpost, is a free on-campus food pantry and career closet for all currently enrolled UT students. Furthermore, if you are comfortable notifying me, please do so, as I may have additional resources I can share.

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS

By [UT Austin policy](#), you must notify me of your pending absence as far in advance as possible of the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

NAMES AND PRONOUNS

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name, unless they have added a "chosen name" with the registrar's office, which you can do so [here](#). I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name that is different from what appears on the official roster, and by the pronouns you have asked to be used for you (she/he/they/ze, etc). Please advise me of any changes early in the semester so that I may make appropriate updates to my records. For instructions on how to add your pronouns to Canvas, visit [this site](#). Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender identity & expression, and nationalities. More resources available on the Gender and Sexuality Center's website, www.utgsc.org.



LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the Indigenous lands of Turtle Island, the ancestral name for what now is called North America. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge the Alabama-Coushatta, Caddo, Carrizo/Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Comanche, Kickapoo, Lipan Apache, Tonkawa and Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, and all the American Indian and Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas.

University Resources for Students

DISABILITY & ACCESS (D&A)

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability & Access (D&A). Please refer to the D&A website for more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

COUNSELING AND MENTAL HEALTH CENTER (CMHC)

We all benefit from support during times of struggle. Know you are not alone. If you are experiencing signs of stress, anxiety, depression, academic concerns, loneliness, difficulty sleeping, or any other concern impacting your well-being – you are strongly encouraged to connect with CMHC. The Counseling and Mental Health Center is located on campus and provides a wide variety of mental health services to UT students including crisis services, counseling services with immediate support and well-being resources. Additionally, CARE Counselors are located within each of the academic schools and colleges. These counselors are familiar with the concerns that are unique to their unit's students. For more information on CMHC, visit cmhc.utexas.edu or call 512-471-3515.

UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES (UHS)

Your physical health and well-being are a priority. University Health Services is the on-campus medical facility providing high quality medical care and patient education to UT students. Services offered include general medicine, specialty clinics including the gynecology clinic, sports medicine, nutrition services, allergy, immunization and travel health and physical therapy, an urgent care, a 24/7 nurse advice line, and a lab and radiology services. For additional information, visit healthyhorns.utexas.edu or call 512-471-4955.

SANGER LEARNING CENTER

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes



and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <https://ugs.utexas.edu/slc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

STUDENT EMERGENCY SERVICES (SES)

Student Emergency Services in the Office of the Dean of Students helps students and their families during difficult or emergency situations. Assistance includes outreach, advocacy, intervention, support, and referrals to relevant campus and community resources. If you need to be absent from class Due to a family emergency, medical or mental health concern, or academic difficulty Due to crisis or an emergency situation, you can work with Student Emergency Services. SES will document your situation and notify your professors. Additional information is available at <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/> or by calling 512-471-5017.

Important Safety Information

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or professors, contact BCCAL (the Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line) at <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line> or by calling 512-232-5050. Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible, however the university may be required to release some information to appropriate parties.

CLASSROOM SAFETY AND COVID-19

- For any illness, students should stay home if they are sick or contagious, not only to stop the spread, but also to prioritize their personal well-being.
- UHS provides [symptomatic COVID-19 testing](#) for students. Schedule your appointment by calling 512-471-4955 or online within the [MyUHS patient portal](#). Learn more about [symptomatic COVID-19 testing here](#).
- Disposable masks are available for students at the William C. Powers, Jr. Student Activity Center and Texas Union hospitality desks.
- The [exposure action chart](#) offers guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19 or if you test positive. If you experience symptoms, stay home and isolate and follow the instructions for symptomatic in the chart.
- Stay up to date on [COVID-19 vaccinations](#) by getting all available boosters when eligible. Vaccines are available through University Health Services.
- Additionally, UHS maintains up to date resources on COVID-19, which can be found here:
- [COVID-19 Information and Resources](#)

CARRYING OF HANDGUNS ON CAMPUS



Texas' Open Carry law expressly prohibits a licensed to carry (LTC) holder from carrying a handgun openly on the campus of an institution of higher education such as UT Austin. Students in this class should be aware of the following university policies:

- Students in this class who hold a license to carry are asked to [review the university policy regarding campus carry](#).
- Individuals who hold a license to carry are eligible to carry a concealed handgun on campus, including in most outdoor areas, buildings and spaces that are accessible to the public, and in classrooms.
- It is the responsibility of concealed-carry license holders to carry their handguns on or about their person at all times while on campus. Open carry is NOT permitted, meaning that a license holder may not carry a partially or wholly visible handgun on campus premises or on any university driveway, street, sidewalk or walkway, parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area.
- Per my right, I prohibit carrying of handguns in my personal office. Note that this information will also be conveyed to all students verbally during the first week of class. This written notice is intended to reinforce the verbal notification, and is not a “legally effective” means of notification in its own right.

TITLE IX DISCLOSURE

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Education Code, Section 51.252 (formerly known as [Senate Bill 212](#)) requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, report any information to the [Title IX Office](#) regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, written forms, applications, one-on-one conversations, class assignments, class discussions, or third-party reports) must report it to the [Title IX Coordinator](#). Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, please remember that I will be required to report this information.

Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Education Code, Section 51.252, they are [mandatory reporters](#) under federal Title IX regulations and are required to report [a wide range of behaviors we refer to as sexual misconduct](#), including the types of misconduct covered under Texas Education Code, Section 51.252. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex – including pregnancy and parental status – in educational programs and activities. The Title IX Office has [developed supportive ways](#) and compiled [campus resources](#) to support all impacted by a Title IX matter.

If you would like to speak with a Case Manager for Support and Resources, who can provide support, resources or academic accommodations, in the Title IX Office, please email supportandresources@austin.utexas.edu. A Case Manager can also provide support, resources and accommodations for pregnant, nursing, and parenting students.



For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/>, contact the Title IX Office via email at titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419.

CAMPUS SAFETY

The following are recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the [Office of Campus Safety](#), 512-471-5767,

- Students should sign up for Campus Emergency Text Alerts at the page linked above.
- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus must evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- For more information, please visit the [Office of Emergency Management](#).