I 320U Topics in User Experience Design: User Research

Class Meets: *Tuesdays & Thursdays*
06:30 PM - 08:00 PM
SZB 2.814 & over Zoom

Instructor: Michelle R. Peterson, Ph.D.   **Office:** Virtual
Pronouns: she/her/hers   **Office Hours:** By appointment
Email: michelle.peterson@austin.utexas.edu
Phone: 214-629-9771

Course Description

University Catalog Course Description

This course addresses concepts and methods of user experience (UX) research, from identifying users' problems and needs to evaluating concepts and designs for viability, usability, and satisfaction. It also covers aspects of managing the research process, including recruiting participants, setting up and conducting studies, analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, and disseminating insights. Students will work both individually and as part of a team to complete research exercises and projects. The course includes hands-on practice with several common UX research methods such as observation, interview, survey, focus groups, and expert review. We will also touch on applied topics such as research in enterprises, consulting, and startup organizations, lean/agile techniques, mobile research approaches, and strategies for persuasively communicating findings and product implications.

What will I learn?

Students successfully completing this class will be able to:
- Identify the main concepts in user experience research.
- Explain the importance of research in a user-centered design process.
- Articulate practical and ethical considerations when planning and executing research projects.
- Demonstrate the foundational building block skills of research
- Plan and conduct user research studies using a variety of qualitative and quantitative research methods, **built upon** the three building block skills
- Collect and analyze qualitative and quantitative data
- Turn research results into actionable recommendations for the product team
- Share research results with a stakeholder audience using the principles of storytelling and persuasive writing and presentation.

How will I learn?

The course will entail these major instructional techniques:
- Assigned readings from textbooks and other sources
- Lectures on the topic of the week
- In-class exercises and discussions, to demonstrate and practice the skills introduced each week
- Homework assignments for further practice
- Quizzes to review the material and probe understanding

Pre-requisites for the course

Successful completion of I310 - Introduction to UX Design

How to succeed in this course

1. **Be present** both physically show up to class and be focused on the class material during class.
2. **Participate fully** both in class and in online discussions.
3. **Read the material for the week before class** and be prepared to apply the concepts during class discussions and exercises.
4. **Pull your weight** during in-class exercises and group assignments.

Course Requirements

Required Materials

Nunnally, B., & Farkas, D. (2017). *UX Research: Practical Techniques for Designing Better Products*. O'Reilly Media, Inc.
[Amazon link] [UT Library E-Book Link]

Sauro, J., & Lewis, J. R. (2016). *Quantifying the User Experience: Practical Statistics for User Research*. Elsevier.
[Amazon link] [UT Library E-Book Link]

Jarrett, C. (2021). *Surveys that work: A practical guide for designing better surveys*. Rosenfeld Media.
[Amazon link] [UT Library E-Book Link]

Additional readings, videos, and lectures may be linked online through canvas.
All class materials, supplemental resources, grades, and announcements will be posted on the course Canvas site: https://utexas.instructure.com.

Classroom expectations
- **Show up on time to each class prepared and ready to participate.** Your preparation for discussion and participation is extremely important for you and your classmates. Do the readings in advance of each class, review the supplemental materials, bring all materials you need to complete the in-class

exercises or discussions.
- **Participate and engage.** UX is not a spectator sport. You need to participate in class by communicating your understanding and testing others' understanding with questions and dialogue. This course requires active participation. The more you put into it, the more you will get out of it. Active participation engaging in classroom activities and discussions, asking questions when necessary, and putting your best effort into all assignments.
- **Respect each other.** You are expected to work, individually and with others, to create an atmosphere that is safe, valuing of one another, and open to diverse perspectives. Everyone is expected to show courtesy, civility, and respect for one another. Comments or postings that degrade or ridicule another are unacceptable.

Grading for this Course

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

Assignments	Percent of Total Grade
In-class and online discussions	10%
In-class exercises and homework exercises	45%
Quizzes	45%

Course Outline

All instructions, assignments, readings, and essential information will be on the Canvas website at https://utexas.instructure.com. Check this site regularly and use it to ask questions about the course schedule.

This course is divided into modules. Each week, I will release a new module that will focus on one topic of user research. Each module will contain some or all of the following activities:
- Required Reading(s) – One or more chapters in your textbook and/or additional sources
- Required Video(s) – One or more videos linked in the module
- Supplementary materials – readings, websites, or videos that I recommend, if you would like to know more about the topic of the week.
- Required assignments:
  - o Discussion posts on Canvas
  - o In-class exercises
  - o Homework exercises
  - o Review Quizzes – Some modules will have a short exercise to help you review the material and solidify your knowledge of the topic.

Changes to the schedule may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced (although I will do my best to ensure that you receive the changes with as much advanced notice as possible).

Module	Dates	Topics	Textbook & Other Readings
0	Aug 22th	Introductions	

Module	Dates	Topics	Textbook & Other Readings
1	Aug 24th & Aug 29th	Research Ethics & Logistics	Chapters 1, 6 & 7 of *UX Research*
2	Aug 31st & Sep 5th	Methods Overview & Building Block Skills	Chapters 2, 3, 4 & 5 of *UX Research*
3	Sep 7th & 12th	Qualitative Discovery – Planning & Moderation skills	Chapters 8, 9, 10 & 11 of *UX Research*
4	Sep 14th & 19th	Qualitative Discovery – Group Methods	Chapters 9 & 10 of *Designing the Conversation*
5	Sep 21st & 26th	Qualitative Evaluative Methods	Chapter 12 of *Designing the Conversation*
6	Sep 28th & Oct 3rd	Qualitative Data Analysis	Chapter 13 of *UX Research*
7	Oct 5th & 10th	Quantitative Methods – Benchmarking, Card Sorts & Tree Tests	Chapters 1 & 2 of *Quantifying the User Experience*
8	Oct 12th & 17th	Quantitative deep dive – Standardized UX Questionnaires & Custom Questionnaires	Chapter 8 of *Quantifying the User Experience*
9	Oct 19th & 24th	Planning quant research	Chapters 1 – 5 of *Guide to Writing Questionnaires*
10	Oct 26th - Nov 7th	Writing good survey questions	Chapter 3, Spotlight E, and Chapter 4 of *Surveys that Work*
11	Nov 9th & 14th	Quantitative data analysis	Spotlights B, D, H, & I, and Chapters 6 of *Surveys that Work*
12	Nov 16th & 28th	Working with stakeholders & Sharing results persuasively	Chapter 7 of *Surveys that Work* Chapters 14 & 15 of *UX Research*
13	Nov 30th	Careers in UXR: enterprise, start-ups, & consulting; Research in a Lean and Agile World	Supplemental online sources linked in Canvas

Policies & Resources

Classroom Policies

Statement on Learning Success

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. 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'll 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. Many are listed on this syllabus, but I am happy to connect you with a person or Center if you would like.

Grading Policies

Final grades are firm, and no additional curve is available.

Grade	Cutoff	Points needed
A	94%	940
A-	90%	900
B+	87%	870
B	84%	840
B-	80%	800
C+	77%	770
C	74%	740
C-	70%	700
D	65%	650
F	<65%	<650

GRACE POLICY: Time-bank options

No late assignments are accepted except for documented illnesses or religious holy days (see below). However, sometimes we have bad days, bad weeks, and bad semesters. In an effort to accommodate any unexpected, unfortunate personal crisis, I have built "time banks" into our course. You do not have to utilize this policy, but if you find yourself struggling with unexpected personal events, I encourage you to e-mail me as soon as possible to notify me that you are using our grace policy. You may use this policy one of two ways (please choose, and let me know):

- You may have a two-day grace period for one assignment, OR
- You may have 2 one-day extensions for two different assignments.

Absences

Excused Absence: The only absences that will be considered excused are for religious holidays or extenuating circumstances due to an emergency. If you plan to miss class due to observance of a religious holiday, please let us know at least 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.

If you must be absent, use your resources wisely. Ask your classmates to get a run-down and notes on any lessons you miss. If you find there are topics that we covered while you were gone that raise questions, you may drop into office hours or schedule a meeting to discuss. Email specific questions you have in advance so that we can make the most of our time. "What did I miss?" is not specific enough.

Submission requirements

All written assignments need to meet basic college-level writing standards. Completing your assignments at the last minute usually result in a poor grade. Your writing will be graded on the following criteria:
- Grammar and spelling
- The clarity of thoughts and structures demonstrated in your writing
- Your use of resources (including citations)
- The overall quality of the writing

You must cite all sources you have used in your written submissions and provide complete citation information at the end of your submitted documents, including any module readings or the online lecture. Remember that using others' materials without proper reference may result in plagiarism and suffer strict academic consequences. All citations should follow a formal citation style (e.g., APA, Chicago). For more information on citation styles, please see the Purdue University OWL guide: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/

All writing assignments will be passed through Turnitin for plagiarism check. The results of this software analysis are not the only method I use to determine whether something is plagiarized. Plagiarism is my least favorite thing to deal with, so avoid it!

Personal Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name, unless they have added a "preferred name" with the Gender and Sexuality Center (http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/publications-and-resources/). 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 gender pronouns you use (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 https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/633028/pages/profile-pronouns.

Student Rights & Responsibilities
Rights
- You have a right to a learning environment that supports mental and physical wellness.
- You have a right to respect.
- You have a right to be assessed and graded fairly.
- You have a right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- You have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
- You have a right to meaningful and equal participation, to self-organize groups to improve your learning environment.
- You have a right to learn in an environment that is welcoming to all people. No student shall be isolated, excluded or diminished in any way.

With these rights come responsibilities
- You are responsible for taking care of yourself, managing your time, and communicating with the teaching team and with others if things start to feel out of control or overwhelming.
- You are responsible for acting in a way that is worthy of respect and always respectful of others.
- Your experience with this course is directly related to the quality of the energy that you bring to it, and your energy shapes the quality of your peers' experiences.
- You are responsible for creating an inclusive environment and for speaking up when someone is excluded.

- You are responsible for holding yourself accountable to these standards, holding each other to these standards, and holding the teaching team accountable as well.

University Resources and Policies

Academic Integrity

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code: "As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity." Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT. Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must cite your sources. Otherwise, you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. You are responsible for understanding UT's Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address: https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/standardsofconduct.php

Q Drop Policy

If you want to drop a class after the 12th class day, you'll need to execute a Q drop before the Q-drop deadline, which typically occurs near the middle of the semester. Under Texas law, you are only allowed six Q drops while you are in college at any public Texas institution. For more information, see: http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/csacc/academic/adddrop/qdrop

Land Acknowledgment

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Indigenous land. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to the Carrizo & Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Caddo, Tonkawa, Comanche, Lipan Apache, Alabama-Coushatta, Kickapoo, Tigua 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, here on Turtle Island.

Online Instruction

All students must use a UT Zoom account in order to participate in classes, office hours, and any UT affiliated events.

Class Recording Privacy

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.

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class without explicit, written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. The University is well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found on such sites that are associated with a specific student, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure of the course.

Religious Holy Days

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence as far in advance as possible to 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.

Services for Students with Disabilities

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 and Access (D&A). Please refer to D&A's website for contact and 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

The [Counseling and Mental Health Center](#) serves UT's diverse campus community by providing high quality, innovative and culturally informed mental health programs and services that enhance and support students' well-being, academic and life goals. To learn more about your counseling and mental health options, call CMHC at (512) 471-3515. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, call the CMHC Crisis Line 24/7 at (512) 471-2255.

The 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 [Sanger Learning Center](#) or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

Student Emergency Services

UT's [Student Emergency Services](#) provides assistance, intervention, and referrals to support students navigating challenging or unexpected issues that impact their well-being and academic success. 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, please register with [Student Emergency Services](#). SES will verify your situation and notify your professors.

Title IX Reporting

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

- Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
- Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
- Investigate and discipline violations of the university's [relevant policies](#).

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered "Responsible Employees" or "Mandatory Reporters," which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX-related incidents** that are disclosed in writing,

discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email advocate@austin.utexas.edu For more information about reporting options and resources, visit the Title IX Office or email titleix@austin.utexas.edu.

Campus Safety

The following are recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, 512-471-5767,

- 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 emergency preparedness.