

Introduction to User Experience Design

I 310U

Fall 2024, SZB 2.802

CLASS MEETS: 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM, Tues and Thurs.

Instructor: Hanlin Li, Ph.D.

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Pronouns: she/her

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Course Description

UNIVERSITY CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to foundational knowledge, methods, and skills for designing human-centered user experience (UX) around interactive systems. Students will become familiar with user research, concept generation, design methods, and user evaluation. In addition, students will also learn how to collaborate in a team setting, communicate design rationales, and present compelling narratives about their work.

The class will be structured with lectures, hands-on design activities such as design critiques, projects, and presentations.

PRE-REQUISITES FOR THE COURSE

I 301 Introduction to Informatics is a co-requisite for this course.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will be able to apply foundational design knowledge, methods and skills to create effective and compelling user experience and products.
2. Students will also be able to evaluate design solutions with peers and users and communicate their design effectively.
3. Students will gain experiences with defining and solving problems as a team.

Course Requirements and Grading

REQUIRED MATERIALS

All course readings will be available via the course Canvas site.

REQUIRED DEVICES

You need laptops to download the readings and complete the assignments. You will also need to bring your laptop for in-class exercises.

For the lecture and discussion components of the class, I will initially allow the use of laptops. However, if they impede learning or if class discussion is not optimal, this policy will be reconsidered.

CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Students are expected to attend every class and give mid-term and final project presentations in person. As this course is very interactive, you will be engaging with your classmates in discussions, collaborative exercises, and peer reviews. Remote attendance is not an option.

Absences will only be excused in situations following university policy (illness, religious holy days, participation in University activities at the request of university authorities, and compelling absences beyond your control) with proper documentation and timely notification (prior to class for non-emergencies).

ASSIGNMENTS

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

Sketches: Sketching is a common practice used by designers to reflect on existing objects and interactions, and brainstorm ways of improving them. Note that it is not about the quality of sketches, but the **quantity**, i.e. generating tons of ideas! For this class, you will sketch situations and ideas that you encounter in your daily life for ten weeks. Bring them to class every Wednesday so you can receive credit for this weekly assignment.

Reading discussion: Throughout the semester, you will be assigned readings carefully chosen from foundational textbooks on UX. These readings will guide our class discussion and activities, so it will be important to read the assigned readings before the classes according to the schedule.

Students will post their reading responses on the canvas site on the weeks with required readings. These reading responses are meant to help students reflect on what they have learned, what they disagree with the readings, and what lingering questions they have. Reading responses should be of reasonable length (200+ words). Your reading responses will be graded for quality and originality. I expect you would spend the first paragraph summarizing the readings and the rest of the response would be to elaborate your reflections and questions. You can relate it to your personal experiences, your own coursework or projects, or other courses you have taken.

Reading discussions are due every Monday and Wednesday by 12 pm. No late work will be accepted.

Individual Projects: Throughout the semester, you will complete two individual projects: 1) understanding user experiences and 2) critiquing and redesigning user interfaces. Detailed guidelines will be provided on the canvas site.

Group Project: You will form your own team to complete one group project. Detailed guidelines will be provided on the canvas site. We will conduct teamwork **peer evaluation** surveys after the mid-term and final presentations. In the survey, you will be asked to evaluate your teammates, including yourself, and your collaboration experiences. The survey results will be factored into the team project grade, which may result in different team project grades for different students. For example, if a student has not contributed to the team project consistently, the student will get a lower team project grade than their teammates.

Bonus Points: Students may receive up to 2 bonus points by completing additional assignments. I will announce the specific assignments during the semester.

Assignments	Percent of Total Grade
1. Attendance and active participation	10%
2. Sketches	10%
3. Reading discussion	10%
4. Individual Project 1	10%
5. Individual Project 2	10%
6. Group project	50%
6.1 Project proposal	3%
6.2 Interview protocol	2%
6.3 Interview analysis	5%
6.4 midterm presentation	10%
6.5 Concepts and storyboards	3%
6.6 Paper prototypes and design rationales	4%
6.7 Wireframing	3%
6.8 User testing	5%
6.9 high-fidelity prototype	5%
6.10 project presentation	10%
Total	100%

LATE WORK AND MAKING UP MISSED WORK

Because students will present their projects in person during class, late work for class presentations, i.e. 6.4 and 6.8 in the Assignments section, will not be accepted. For all other assignments, late work will be accepted, subject to 5% grade reduction per day of delay.

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
W1	Introduction + Design thinking and user experience
W2	Identifying problems through research
W3	Analyzing research
W4	Translating research into design
W5	Understanding user journey
W6	Ideating design concepts
W7	Mid-term presentations
W8	Making a creative and competitive design
W9	Individual meeting with instructors, Sketching & prototyping
W10	Evaluating prototypes with users & incorporating feedback

W11	Designing data-intensive systems
W12	Refining design and aesthetics (Pt.1)
W13	Refining design and aesthetics (Pt.2); Presenting your ideas
W14	Thanksgiving week
W15	Final Presentation

Class Norms and Community Agreements

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.

COMMUNITY NORM CREATION

We will have conversations about our class norms throughout the semester. I would like to create a supportive learning environment for everyone and students will have opportunities to provide anonymous feedback about class norms.

COMMUNICATION

The course Canvas site can be found at utexas.instructure.com. Please email me through Canvas. 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 Canvas uses.

ASKING FOR HELP

I will have office hours every Wednesday so feel free to stop by with questions.

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 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>.

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 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.

Important Safety Information

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

I urge students who are struggling for any reason and who believe that it might impact their performance in the course to reach out to me if they feel comfortable. This will allow me to provide any resources or accommodations that I can. If you are seeking mental health support, call the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC) at 512-471-3515 (8a.m.-5p.m., Monday-Friday), or you may also contact Bryce Moffett, LCSW-S (iSchool CARE counselor) at 512-232-4449. Bryce's office is located in FAC18S and she holds drop in Office Hours on Wednesday from 2-3pm. For urgent mental health concerns, please contact the CMHC 24/7 Crisis Line at 512-471-2255.

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.