

DSID 131: Fundamentals of UI Design

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Class Time: Mon / Wed 7pm - 9:50 pm

Class Location: ART 206

Office hours to be held immediately after class by appointment only. Appointments can be made by email or phone call.

This course gives an accelerated, intense project-driven introduction to the problems of designing digital products, rooted in principles of interaction and interface design. These principles are drawn from professional practice per the instructor's experience, as well as knowledge from various authors, referenced in class. Being uniquely situated in the heart of Silicon Valley, our class will feature periodic guest speakers and real-world examples to enhance everyone's learning. To get the most out of this course, students must participate, contribute, and demonstrate a measurable good-faith effort, as represented by the assignments and project milestones described below.

The central theme of the course is that design is a human-centric problem solving activity, based upon the ideas of conversation and rhetoric towards achieving simple, focused, elegant solutions. Each week we will delve deeper into what this means in terms of visual design, interactive behaviors, and language/content.

By the end of the term, students will understand the overall process, address typical interaction design problems/issues, and be able to generate compelling solutions in a variety of forms: sketches, mock-ups, and prototypes (a movie, a click-through, or more advanced). Students will also develop a basis for how to critique designs and present themselves effectively.

Pre-requisites

Undergraduates: BS Industrial Design or BS Graphic Design Majors, DSID 126.

Graduates: Enrolled in Human Factors-Ergonomics Masters program.

It is assumed that you are familiar with Industrial Design process and techniques, as these will be referred to on a regular basis. It is up to you to seek help from the instructors or other classmates if this is not the case. It is also assumed that you have basic knowledge of the following:

Some drawing/image editing software (Photoshop, or Illustrator, or Fireworks, etc.)

AND

Some presentation software (PowerPoint, or Keynote, etc.).

AND

Pen and paper to draw boxes and sketches.

If you know how to make interactive mockups in HTML, great! But that is not a requirement.

If you know how to make Flash demos, awesome! But that is not a requirement.

No programming or scripting knowledge is needed.

Weekly class schedule

Week 1

Mon 8/25	Intro, logistics/syllabus, HW #1
Wed 8/27	Review HW #1, introduce project, set up teams, digital craft

Week 2

Mon 9/1	LABOR DAY NO CLASS
Wed 9/3	Rhetoric/argument, attention, persuasion Read: "Good Design in the Digital Age" by Richard Buchanan HW #2 assigned

Week 3

Mon 9/8	Metaphor, language, affordances Read: Norman, "Design of Everyday Things", and Kolko, "Interaction Design", HW #3 assigned
Wed 9/10	Visual noise, complexity, emphasis Read: Tufte, "Envisioning Information", HW #4 assigned

Week 4

Mon 9/15	Time, motion, behavior, direct manipulation Read: Saffer, "Designing Interactions", HW #5 assigned
Wed 9/17	User research, problem scoping, requirements, use cases, HW #6 assigned

Week 5

Mon 9/22

Type, color, grids, communication design

Wed 9/24***Milestone: Problem Statement*****Week 6**

Mon 9/29

Exploratory inspiration, metaphor sketching

Wed 10/1

Cont. metaphor sketches

Week 7

Mon 10/6

Metaphors to flows, use cases

Wed 10/8

Flow, sequence, use cases

Week 8

Mon 10/13

Cont. flow diagramming

Wed 10/15

Start storyboarding & wireframes

Week 9

Mon 10/20

Cont. storyboards/wireframes

Wed 10/22

Cont. storyboards/wireframes

Week 10

Mon 10/27

Cont. storyboards/wireframes

Wed 10/29***Midpoint progress check***

Week 11

Mon 11/3	Comps and specs
Wed 11/5	Comps and specs

Week 12

Mon 11/10	Comps and specs
Wed 11/12	Prototypes

Week 13

Mon 11/17	Prototypes
Wed 11/19	Prototypes

Week 14

Mon 11/24	<i>Milestone: Solution Presentation</i>
Wed 11/26	THANKSGIVING NO CLASS

Week 15

Mon 12/1	Alternative design
Wed 12/3	Alternative design

Week 16

Mon 12/8	Alternative design
Wed 12/10	<i>Milestone: Present Alternative Design</i>

Grade composition

Participation 25%
Design work/assignments 50%
Project Milestones 25%

Grading criteria

Quality: The quality of your work will be determined by your ability to translate the principles conveyed in class into successful deliverables throughout the course duration. Quality takes into consideration your ability to consistently deliver high quality work successfully supported by useful and convincing information.

Effort: Your effort will be assessed by the amount of energy and enthusiasm you apply towards this class. Although much of your effort will be determined by the amount and quality of work that you produce; it will also be evaluated by participation in class and class activities.

Completeness: Finally, you will be evaluated by the completeness of your work for this course. This simply means, did you produce all that was required and deliver them at the proper deadlines.

Students are urged to let me know of any confusion or problem understanding the course content early in the semester. Please do not wait till the end of the term! The content is organized so later concepts build upon earlier ones (including the assignments) so falling behind can be very risky if not addressed early on. *Do not wait until the end of the semester to discuss problems you are having in class or with your grades!*

Homework Turn-In

Homework assignments are due at the end of the stated class day either via email (PDF, etc.) or hand-in physical deliverable.

For every day the homework is late, 5% is deducted in multiples: 5 off the first late day, 10 off the second day, 15 off third day, etc. So get them in on time!

You have ONE shot to re-do any homework assignment until the end of the semester but note that the higher of the two grades will be taken, no averaging or extra credit.

Readings

There are no required readings as such. The following books are highly suggested for those who seek a deeper understanding of the issues and various perspectives on interface design.

- *Designing Visual Interfaces: Communication-Oriented Techniques* by Kevin Mullet and Darrell Sano
- *About Face 2.0: The Essentials of Interaction Design* by Alan Cooper and Robert Reimann
- *Designing Interfaces: Patterns for Effective Interaction Design* by Jenifer Tidwell
- *The Elements of Friendly Software Design* by Paul Heckel
- *The Design of Everyday Things* by Donald A. Norman
- *Envisioning Information* by Edward R. Tufte
- *Designing for People* by Henry Dreyfuss
- *A Designer's Art* by Paul Rand