

CTIN 405 - Design and Technology for Mobile Experiences

USC School of Cinematic Arts, CTIN 405

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Course Description:

The last few years have seen a dramatic shift in the way mobile experiences are built. The iPhone and Android platforms (to name two) have enabled designers and developers to come up with unique and novel products. At the same time, pervasive experiences such as “Big Games” or ARGs (Alternate Reality Games) have experienced a surge in popularity. How do mobile devices, our physical environment, and our real lives merge to form a new type of platform to build experiences on top of? How do we go about designing and developing these experiences?

This class is designed to teach students core conceptual and design skills necessary to invent compelling mobile experiences. The emphasis of the class will be on developing project ideas based on readings and class discussion, and implementing working prototypes based on those concepts. Projects may be executed in code for a mobile platform, but knowledge of programming is not required.

Students will:

- Learn core mobile design concepts
- Implement working prototypes of their designs
- Become familiar with core mobile technologies, and understand how to use these technologies to help realize their designs
- Develop new methods and terminologies for a rapidly developing medium

Meeting Information:

Lecture / Presentations: 2 hours
Units: 2

Pre-requisites: N/A

Readings:

There will be no required textbook. Class readings will be provided as web links or downloadable PDFs.

Web Readings:

Additional web-based course readings will be made available on the class blog.

Evaluation of student performance:

Participation	10%
Assignments	20%
Projects	50%
Final Project	20%
Total:	100%

Course content

Week 1 (Jan 10): Introduction

Overview of the course syllabus. Discussion of Mobile Platforms and Toolkits. Expectations and Goals. What does mobile mean to you?

Assignment:

- Maneki Niko (A short story by Bruce Sterling <http://bit.ly/9VulmD>)
- Come to the next class prepared to discuss your favorite mobile service or game

Week 2: MLK JR. Holiday - No Class (Jan 17)

Week 3 (Jan 24): Redefining Mobile Games

Introduction to Mobile device interfaces and inputs: what tools are available to designers? Moving beyond Angry Birds.

Assignment:

- RePlace-ing Space (Harrison/Dourish) (<http://bit.ly/cLnWLv>)
- Narrative Spaces (Jenkins) (Space, Time, Play)
- **Project 1 Due next week**

Week 4 (Jan 31): Defining “Place”

The distinction between Place and Space, and its importance in mobile. Designing for Place vs. designing for Space. **Project 1 Due.**

Assignment:

- Urban Free Flow: The Individual as an Active Performer (Feireiss)
- Shadow of the Colossus: Player versus Terrain (Thomas)
- Reality has a gaming layer (Interview with Kevin Slavin <http://oreil.ly/borSJM>)
- The Street as Platform (Dan Hill, <http://bit.ly/cdVdzF>)

Week 5 (Feb 7): The Real World as a Platform

Sensor Networks and Mobile Devices. Exposing the APIs of Cities: The Mirror's Edge Solution? Battling our environments with technology. Making play spaces from the Real World.

Assignment:

- Gameification and it's discontents (<http://j.mp/pawnd10>) OR (<http://bit.ly/c10MdY>)
- Majestic: Blurring the Lines between Computer Games and Reality (Space, Time, Play)
- Ubiquitous Gaming: A Vision for the Future of Enchanted Species (McGonigal, Space, Time, Play)

Week 6 (Feb 14): IRL Game Mechanics

The Pros and Cons of turning life into a game: Strategies & examples.

Assignment:

- Macon Money, Area/Code (<http://bit.ly/aKi2h0>)
- Conquest, Area/Code (<http://bit.ly/aKi2h0>)
- Animal Crossing: A Game in Time (Kelley, in Space Time Play)
- Some notes on the design of pervasive games (de Waal, The Mobile City <http://bit.ly/bMIgdy>)
- **Midterm Project Due after President's Day Holiday**

Week 7 (Feb 21): No Class, President's Day Holiday

Week 8 (Feb 28): Pervasive & Big Games

Big fun outdoors, with or without technology. How do we design these kind of experiences. What makes a big or pervasive game a success? What are the social implications of big/pervasive games? **Midterm Projects Due.**

Assignment:

- Mobile Phones, social networks and location data: Recognizing the Nuances of Privacy (<http://bit.ly/a3kgYG>)
- Hidden in Plain Sight: An Interview with Adam Greenfield (<http://bit.ly/azjpege>)

Week 9 (March 7): Always on (side effects)

What are the side effects of ubiquitous technology? How can we use tracking and “City as Platform” technologies to our benefit without losing our privacy or subtle qualities of our humanity?

- ARQuake (An Outdoor Augmented Reality Shooter)
- Phantom City (Van Alen Institute <http://bit.ly/aEaJuN>)

Week 10 (March 14): No Class, Spring Break

Week 11 (March 21): Augmented Reality and it's Discontents

A history of Augmented Reality, filled with pictures of people wearing laptops on their backs. What are the benefits of Augmented Reality designs? What technologies are involved in Augmented Reality? Should we believe the AR Hype?

Assignment

- Rheingold, Smart Mobs Chapter 2
- IDEO social mobiles prototypes (<http://bit.ly/9nVfG3>)
- **Project 3 Due next week**

Week 12 (March 28): Social Mobiles

Discussing the Social impacts of mobile technology and design. How can we design mobile experiences that enhance social connections? A brief history of mobile social services, games, and applications. **Project 3 Due.**

Assignment:

- The New Art of Gaming, or What Gaming can Learn from Installation Art (Game, Set, Match II)

Week 13 (April 4): Art, Music & Performance

Survey of recent mobile-focused art, including installation, robotics, wearable computing, music, and performance.

Assignment:

- Work on Final Projects

Week 14 (April 11): Final Project Workshop

Students will be allowed class time to work on the final project.

Assignment:

- **Final Projects due Week 15**

Week 15 (April 18): Final Project Presentations 1 Class Presentations: First group of final projects

Week 16 (April 25): Final Project Presentations 2 Class Presentations: Second group of final projects

In-class Workshops, Project Presentations, and Exercises:

Each meeting of the class will consist of a lecture followed by either class project presentations and critiques, project workshops, or exercises. Class presentations allow students to get feedback on their work on a regular basis, while workshops and exercises allow the class to work on their projects and concepts and get help before larger projects are due.

Projects:

During the course of the semester, students will design and implement 3 Projects based around some idea or concept presented in the class. Projects 1 and 3 should be simple and focused, and are designed to help students get up and running quickly with their ideas without being held back by the task of creating larger scale projects. The midterm and final project should be more ambitious in scope, and demonstrate an understanding of core mobile design practices.

Web Readings:

Certain snippets, articles, projects, interviews, blog posts, etc. will be posted each week on the class website for students to read. Many of these articles are named here, but will be linked on the blog.

Exams:

This class will not have any exams.

Missing a Project Deadline, Incompletes:

The only acceptable excuses for missing a project deadline or taking an incomplete in the course are personal illness or a family emergency. Students must inform the professor before the exam and present verifiable evidence in order for a make-up to be scheduled. Students who wish to take incompletes must also present documentation of the problem to the instructor or teaching assistant before final grades are due.

Note for students with disabilities:

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to us as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301, and is open 8:30am - 5:00pm Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Academic Integrity:

The School of Cinema-Television expects the highest standards of academic excellence and ethical performance from USC students. It is particularly important that you are aware of and avoid plagiarism, cheating on exams, submitting a paper to more than one instructor, or submitting a paper authored by anyone other than yourself. Violations of this policy will result in a failing grade and be reported to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. If you have any doubts or questions about these policies, consult "SCAMPUS" and/or confer with the instructor.