



USC VITERBI SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING DATA SCIENCE/INF PROGRAM

Data Science 555: Interaction Design and Usability Testing - 4 units

Fall 2019 (32400D) Syllabus
Monday 6:00pm -9:20pm – KAP 163

Professor Jaime Levy
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Video Conf: <https://zoom.us/s/3233045389>

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Slack Workspace URL: <https://usc-ds555-fall2019.slack.com/>

Professor's Office Hours:

Office hours are available throughout the week over Zoom by appointment. Appointments can be booked by accessing the professor calendar here: <https://jaimelevy.as.me/OfficeHours>. For minor issues (i.e. absences, simple homework questions) it is highly recommended that you contact a teacher's assistant first.

Catalogue Description

Understand and apply interaction design theory and techniques to conceive, design and test responsive websites that run on the web and mobile devices.

Expanded Course Description:

Surveys the theory and practice of interaction design and the development of user interfaces. Through both analysis and design projects, students have an opportunity to learn best practices for digital product development workflows, the design of systems that meet end-user needs, and usability testing methods. Topics covered include behavioral and cognitive foundations of interaction design, information architecture, rapid prototyping techniques, usability testing, and the practice of user-centered design.

In this course, students will apply the theory and techniques in a semester-long individual project where they conceive, design, and test a website prototype that runs on the web and mobile devices.

Recommended Prep: Students should have basic familiarity with website development and/or graphic design using a digital layout tool. However, you can easily pick up these skills by allowing yourself extra time to do the assignments and by paying close attention to the homework critiques in class.

This course is foundational and appropriate for students with backgrounds in a wide variety of fields, including any engineering discipline, and other fields including business, cinematic arts, communications, and design.

For many of the assignments, the tool that we will be using only runs on OSX. If you do not own an Apple, please plan on using machines available on campus (labs/libraries).

Course Objectives:

The course objectives are to provide:

- The theory and practice of creating effective user interfaces for modern devices ranging from mobile phones to desktop displays.
- Design guidelines for effective human computer interaction and the cognitive science theory that support the guidelines.
- The ability to create a variety of standard interaction design deliverables
- The ability to rapidly prototype a solution and then conduct usability testing
- To finish the class with an online Interaction Design portfolio and interactive prototype that demonstrates your skills and understanding of the methodology

Methods of Teaching:

Class will include a weekly lecture and in-class discussion or exercise, studio critique, or peer reviews. The materials presented in readings, videos, and lectures are intended to assist you in completing the homework assignments.

Throughout the course, students will be work both independently and in teams to develop a single comprehensive prototype and portfolio that will demonstrate your interaction design skills.

Students will be required to complete all homework assignments, which should average between three to four hours each to complete. A computer with access to the Internet is required to do all of the assignments.

Grading Schema:

Homework Assignments:	40%
Quizzes:	20%
Participation:	10%
Final Project:	20%
Final Presentation:	10%

Total	100%
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Grades will range from A through F. The following is the breakdown for grading:

94 - 100 = A	74 - 76 = C
90 - 93 = A -	70 - 73 = C-
87 - 89 = B+	67 - 69 = D+
84 - 86 = B	64 - 66 = D
80 - 83 = B-	60 - 63 = D-
77 - 79 = C+	Below 60 is an F

The graded coursework will consist of five components:

1. **WEEKLY HOMEWORK (13 assignments)** - A set of exercises will be assigned. Each student is expected to submit the completed assignment on blackboard each week. Homework is due by midnight of the evening prior to day that the class meets. All homework assignments will receive 0-2 points. One point for turning it in on time and up to one point for doing the assignment following the homework instructions. NO assignment will be accepted late. An incomplete grade will be granted only under the conditions specified in the student handbook,

SCAMPUS, which is available online, <http://scampus.usc.edu>. There also will be occasional written quizzes on the readings to make certain that it is being done. Not turning in a fully complete written quiz will affect your homework score.

2. **QUIZZES** - There will be numerous quizzes given during the semester to make sure that students are comprehending the required reading. They are all pass/fail with a required score of 70+%. Anyone caught cheating during quiz time will be given a fail on the quiz and asked to leave class for that day. The Don't Make Me Think quiz = 10% and the three About Face quizzes = 3.3%.

3. **CLASS PARTICIPATION** – Class participation is based on attendance and engagement in informed discussions, student assignment critiques or class exercises. Students are expected to arrive to class each day and stay for the entire class in order for it to be counted. The only accepted reasons for missing classes are (1) having a medical reason such as being contagious with a flu or a condition that renders you immobile (2) a death in your immediate family. In either case, documented proof will be required. You may miss up to one class and still be eligible to earn an “A” assuming you successfully complete all the assignments, the final project, participate in class and give an amazing final presentation. If you want to earn 10% in this category, be certain that you sit toward the front of the classroom, give feedback to at least one assignment every week, and NEVER use your mobile phone during class.

4. **FINAL PROJECT** - Each student will submit a final online interaction portfolio presentation that documents their course work. It is due on evening before the final presentation. The will be a refined version of all the homework assignments ordered to tell a compelling story about their process, what they learned, and the benefits of their core user experience expressed in the prototype. It should be created using Behance. Students will be graded based on creativity, ingenuity, and ability to apply class teachings and feedback.

5. **FINAL PRESENTATION**– In the last week of class, students will present their 5-6-minute portfolio presentation. They will be graded on oral presentation skills such as eye contact, enthusiasm, and storytelling skills.

Class Communication:

Blackboard at USC will be used for class communication and homework assignment uploading. We will also have a Slack channel so that students can easily communicate with each other and the TA with quick questions/feedback.

Required Books and Software/Hardware:

All books will be available to purchase online from Amazon. All articles and videos will be available at no charge and distributed via links from Blackboard.

Required Reading (Abbreviated titles are used in class schedule):

[About Face, The Essentials of Interaction Design](#) (AF), 4th Edition by Alan Cooper, Robert Reimann, David Cronin and Christopher Noessel. ISBN: 978-0321965516

[Don't Make Me Think](#) (Revisited/3rd Edition)(DMMT). A Common Sense Approach to Web and Mobile Usability. Steve Krug, ISBN: 978-0321965516

Recommended Reading:

[Hooked: How to Build Habit-Forming Products](#). Nir Eyal, ISBN: 978-1591847786

Required Software to Purchase:

In order to do at least 50% of the homework assignments, you will need to buy an [educational copy of Sketch](#) (\$50). Sketch only runs on Apple computers so you will either need to own one or use one in the labs. The trial version of Sketch only lasts for 30-days and is impossible to hack or extend for more than a couple days.

Class Conduct:

This is a no-screens class. Please keep your mobile devices and laptops in your bags. Breaking this rule will negatively impact your participation score. Please take handwritten notes or feel welcome to set your phone to record as long as you put it in front of the instructor.

Class Structure & Schedule:

Class sequence, dates, topics and guest speakers are subject to change as the semester proceeds. Any major revisions will be promptly announced in class and/or by email.

	Topics/Activities	Readings & Homework	Assignment Due
Wk 1 8/26	Review of Syllabus. Class introductions. Defining Interaction Design, Implementation, and Usability Testing.	Reading: AF Ch 1, 7. HW 1 - Research two non profit organizations who could use a responsive web site to help them..	
Wk 2 9/2	HOLIDAY – LABOR DAY – NO CLASS	Reading: AF Ch 2, 3. See Blackboard. HW 2 - Conduct research and create your Persona(s).	HW 1
Wk 3 9/9	Product Definition: Design Research, Personas and Goals. Gathering Business Requirements w/ Stakeholder Interviews, User Scenarios, Use Cases, User Stories, Feature Lists	Reading: AF Ch 4, 8. HW 3 - Create a list of User Scenarios, Use Cases, User Stories, & Features.	HW 2
Wk 4 9/16	Information Architecture: Site Maps and Application Maps - Part 1. Flow and Hierarchy Creation. Global and Persistent Navigation. Taxonomies.	Reading: Blackboard articles. HW 4 - Create the first draft of your site or app map using Sketch.	HW 3
Wk 5 9/23	Information Architecture: User Flows, Task Flows. Journey Mapping, Labeling.	Reading: Blackboard articles. HW 5 - Create the final draft of your site or app map.	HW 4
Wk 6 9/30	Interaction Design: The Basics of Wireframing - Sketching, Whiteboarding and Usability Conventions.	Reading: Blackboard articles; AF Ch 5. HW6 - Create a User Flow or Flows for your primary users.	HW 5
Wk 7 10/7	Interaction Design: Understanding Design Patterns, Best Practices, and Effective Visual Hierarchies.	Reading: Blackboard articles; AF Ch 20, DMMT CHS 1-3. HW 7 - Create your Home Page or Main Screen using Sketch.	HW 6
Wk 8 10/14	Interaction Design: Advanced Wireframing - Interface Design, Iconography, Responsive Design. Voice UI.	Reading: AF CH 19; DMMT CHS 4-6. HW 8 - 9. Create all your secondary pages/screens (in Sketch).	HW 7
Wk 9 10/21	Visual Design: Understanding the basics of visual design including typography, graphical layout, and color theory.	Reading: AF CH 17, 21; DMMT CHS 7-10, 10-11. HW 9 - Finalize all your responsive wireframes for your site and apply visual design.	HW 8
Wk 10 10/28	DON'T MAKE ME THINK QUIZ!	Reading: See Blackboard. HW 10 - Getting started on your prototype.	HW 9
Wk 11 11/4	Visual Design: Understanding the intersection of interaction design and visual design for branding and “look and feel”.	Reading: See Blackboard. HW 11 - Write a script for your prototype. Starting making the homepage/main screen interactive	HW 10
Wk 12 11/11	Prototyping: The process and goals of prototyping. Prototype examples. Low-Fidelity to High-Fidelity Prototypes. Overview of prototyping tools/platforms.	Reading: See Blackboard. HW 12 -.Create your first usability test and test it on a friend. Reading: See Blackboard. HW 12 -.	HW 11
Wk 13 11/18	Prototyping: Designing a prototype to get meaningful feedback. Testing prototypes with users.	Reading: Pfd, Chapter 7 - See blackboard. HW 13 - Planning and conducting the research/testing.	HW 12

Wk 14 11/25	Usability Testing: Preparing for a Usability test. Moderating a test. The usability report. Early presentations and critiques.	FINAL - Finish your Project Portfolio and Oral Presentation.	HW 13
Wk 15 12/2	Final Presentations	FINAL - Finish your Project Portfolio and Oral Presentation.	Final Project
Wk 16 12/9 or 12/16	Final Presentations	Enjoy your Winter Recess!	Final Project

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 me as early in the semester as possible. Your letter must be specific as to the nature of any accommodations granted. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday. The telephone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Conduct

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in *SCampus* in Section 11, *Behavior Violating University Standards* <https://scampus.usc.edu/1100-behavior-violating-university-standards-and-appropriate-sa-ctions>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in *SCampus* and university policies on scientific misconduct, <http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct>.

Discrimination, sexual assault, and harassment are not tolerated by the university. You are encouraged to report any incidents to the *Office of Equity and Diversity* <http://equity.usc.edu> or to the *Department of Public Safety* <http://adminopsnet.usc.edu/department/department-public-safety>. This is important for the safety of the whole USC community. Another member of the university community – such as a friend, classmate, advisor, or faculty member – can help initiate the report, or can initiate the report on behalf of another person. *The Center for Women and Men* <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/cwm/> provides 24/7 confidential support, and the sexual assault resource center webpage <http://sarc.usc.edu> describes reporting options and other resources.

Support Systems

A number of USC’s schools provide support for students who need help with scholarly writing. Check with your advisor or program staff to find out more. Students whose

primary language is not English should check with the *American Language Institute* <http://dornsife.usc.edu/ali>, which sponsors courses and workshops specifically for international graduate students. *The Office of Disability Services and Programs* http://sait.usc.edu/academicssupport/centerprograms/dsp/home_index.html provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange the relevant accommodations. If an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, *USC Emergency Information* <http://emergency.usc.edu> will provide safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued by means of blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technology.