



Course ID and Title: ITP-310-32035R: Design for User Experience (4 units)
Spring 2024 | Wednesdays 5:00-8:50 PM

Location

[Zumberge Hall, Room 252](#) (ZHS 252)

Instructor

Mikaila Weaver (she/her)

Office Hours: Available via appointment booked here (<https://bit.ly/mikaila-office-hours>)

Contact Info: mikailaw@usc.edu

Teaching Assistants

Phoebe Um (She/Her), pum@usc.edu

Benjamin Yu (He/Him), bzyu@usc.edu

Catalog Description

Fundamental concepts, techniques, practices, workflows, and tools associated with the practice of user experience and interaction design in web and mobile applications.

Course Description

This course provides a comprehensive overview of the user experience design process. Students learn the fundamental methods, concepts and techniques necessary to design useful, functional and delightful digital software products. Coursework includes lectures on theories and concepts as well as hands-on experience and 'learning by doing' through project work.

Learning Objectives

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Use design thinking in theory and practice to formulate hypotheses to solve real problems
- Conduct empathic and ethnographic research to evaluate product concepts
- Produce UX documentation including wireframes, high fidelity compositions, interactive prototypes, user flows, and design system component equivalents
- Create digital product concepts that address real user needs using Figma
- Work within a UX design team through all the stages of digital product development
- Evaluate UX designs through usability testing
- Apply evaluation results to improve UX designs and iterate meaningfully
- Understand how UX designers fit into product development teams at software companies
- Position themselves as a product design professional in the job market

Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course. Previous design experience is not required to excel in this course.

Course Notes

This course will have a lecture-lab format in order to emphasize learning by doing, using our design tool Figma. Students will be expected to design, present work, collaborate with others, and participate actively in-person during class time. Students in ITP-310 will receive a letter grade based on their willingness to explore, iterate and improve their work over time.

For a hands-on experience, there will be a semester-long group project assignment. Each group will design a new software product that addresses real user needs, and at the end of the semester, each group will present their design concepts and prototypes in front of industry professionals in order to replicate the experience of a digital product designer at a technology company. This course will be web-enhanced in that all lecture materials and many assignments will be available in and completed via the web-based, professional-grade design tool Figma.

Technological Proficiency and Required Software

Students will be expected to attend in-person and to bring a laptop to the class each week. Access to Figma is free for students, and the instructors will ensure that everyone is set up for access the first week. Any student that does not receive these instructions the first week should contact the instructor in order to get the appropriate access to our Figma team. If a student does not have access to their own laptop, they should leverage the USC Computing Center Laptop Loaner Program.

Optional Readings and Supplementary Materials

There are no required reading materials for this course, but recommended supplementary reading includes two seminal books in the field of user experience design:

- [CAD Monkeys, Dinosaur Babies and T-Shaped People: Inside the World of Design Thinking and How It Can Spark Creativity and Innovation](#) by Warren Berger
- [The Design of Everyday Things](#) by Don Norman

Additionally for any students that want to supplement their Figma learning, the [Figma for Edu YouTube channel](#) is highly recommended, specifically the [Office Hours](#) playlist from [Miggi](#)—follow him for workshops, tips and more.

Description and Assessment of Assignments

Assignments are aligned with the learning objectives and emphasize practical applications of the concepts and skills learned throughout the course. Each assignment, including details regarding requirements, method of delivery, and expectations for craftsmanship and quality will be thoroughly explained in class during lectures and in Figma. Students will receive a rubric for each assignment that defines excellence, competency, and below competency work.

The first half of the course will emphasize individual assignments and the second half of the course will emphasize group assignments and a final project that students will be able to use as a portfolio piece that enables them to position themselves as a product design professional in the job market and apply for internships in the field if they so desire.

Attendance and Participation

Students will be expected to attend in-person so that they can complete in-class exercises, work with their teammates and participate in any individual or group project presentations. In any situation where the student cannot attend in person, they are expected to email the instructors in advance for approval.

Active attendance and participation (i.e. completion of in-class exercises in Figma) constitutes no more than 10% of their grade. An additional 5% of their grade is determined by their group project teammates through an anonymous peer evaluation survey conducted at the end of the course.

Grading Breakdown and Scale

The final letter grade for students will be determined by individual and group assignments, participation in in-class exercises, exams and the final project as follows:

Grading Breakdown	% of Grade
Individual Assignments	30%
Group Assignments	20%
Participation	15%
Final Project	15%
Midterm and Final Evaluations	20%
TOTAL	100%

Grading Scale	Letter grade
94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
63 and below	F

Assignment Submission Policy

All assignments will be submitted as links in the [Assignments Spreadsheet](#). Assignments will be completed via either Figma files or Google Docs, Sheets, etc. Any assignment submitted later than the stated deadline will receive -15% first day, -30% second day, and will not be accepted after day 2 (48 hours past stated deadline).

If any links submitted do not have the correct file sharing settings or for any reason all instructors including teaching assistants are not able to access (i.e. “anyone with the link can view”), the assignment will be counted as late until the student resolves said settings. Students should always reach out proactively to the instructors with any questions on assignments or ask for clarification or additional context when the assignment is explained in class as opposed to waiting until the last minute an assignment is due.

Academic Integrity

The University of Southern California is foremost a learning community committed to fostering successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the transmission of ideas. Academic misconduct is in contrast to the university’s mission to educate students through a broad array of first-rank academic, professional, and extracurricular programs and includes any act of dishonesty in the submission of academic work (either in draft or final form).

This course will follow the expectations for academic integrity as stated in the [USC Student Handbook](#). All students are expected to submit assignments that are original work and prepared specifically for the course/section in this academic term. You may not submit work written by others or “recycle” work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s). Students suspected of engaging in academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Other violations of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see the [student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity’s website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Use of Open Source or Creative Commons Materials in this Course

For this class, you are expected to submit work that demonstrates your individual mastery of the course concepts. While it is okay (and sometimes encouraged) to source assets, components and UI elements from the Figma Community of open source resources, it is best practice to cite your sources as you would any other source (i.e. Icons via [Streamline](#)).

Additionally for any group assignments, it is best practice to display attribution for your teammates in any portfolio projects published and otherwise give credit to anyone that contributes time and effort to your project.

If a student is unsure about what constitutes unauthorized assistance beyond the use of cited, open source assets on an exam or assignment, or what content requires citation and/or attribution, they should reach out to the instructors early. If a student is found to be using open source materials in excess without properly crediting the source, they can expect to receive a -50% deduction from their grade.

Use of Generative AI in this Course

Generative AI is encouraged. Learning to use AI is an emerging skill; this is an opportunity for you to discuss with the instructor appropriate use of these tools.

Keep in mind the following:

- AI tools are permitted to help you brainstorm topics or revise work you have written.
- If you provide minimum-effort prompts, you will get low-quality results. You will need to refine your prompts to get good outcomes. This will take work.
- Proceed with caution when using AI tools and do not assume the information provided is accurate or trustworthy. If it gives you a number or fact, assume it is incorrect unless you either know the correct answer or can verify its accuracy with another source. You will be responsible for any errors or omissions provided by the tool.
- AI is a tool, but one that you need to acknowledge using. Please include a paragraph at the end of any assignment explaining if, how, and why you used AI and indicate/specify the prompts you used to obtain the results. **Failure to do so is a violation of academic integrity policies.**

Course Content Distribution and Synchronous Session Recordings Policies

USC has policies that prohibit recording and distribution of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment.

Recording a university class without the express permission of the instructor and announcement to the class, or unless conducted pursuant to an Office of Student Accessibility Services (OSAS) accommodation. Recording can inhibit free discussion in the future, and thus infringe on the academic freedom of other students as well as the instructor. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

Distribution or use of notes, recordings, exams, or other intellectual property, based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study. This includes but is not limited to providing materials for distribution by services publishing course materials. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the internet, or via any other media. ([Living our Unifying Values: The USC Student Handbook](#), page 13).

You may not record this class without the express permission of the instructor and all other students in the class. Distribution of any notes, recordings, exams, or other materials from a university class or lectures — other than for individual or class group study — is prohibited without the express permission of the instructor.

Course Schedule

Topics and assignments described in this schedule are subject to change. Students can expect at least one assignment due each week.

	Lecture / Lab	Assignments Due
Jan. 10	Course Overview Intro to UX Design	A0: In-Class Exercise
Jan. 17	Creative Problem Solving Lab: Design Thinking	A1: Read and Prep A2: Problems that Interest Me A3: Figma Learning Modules
Jan. 24	User Research, Intro to Accessibility Lab: Figma Learning	A4: 3 Problems and 3 Close Contacts A5: Visual Model
Jan. 31	Design as Communication Graphic Design Principles Lab: Figma Learning	A6: Avatar Tutorial A7: Design Your Avatar
Feb. 7	Brand as Interface, Color, Typography Lab: Branding Exercise	A8: Elevator Pitch V1 A9: Read and Reflect
Feb. 14	Elevator Pitch Presentations	A10: Visual Value Proposition V1 A11: Elevator Pitch V2 & Comparison Chart
Feb. 21	Midterm Evaluation Personas, Scenarios and Storyboards & Product Development Processes	A12: Student Interest Survey A13: Readings A14: User Manual
Feb. 28	Principles of Information Architecture Lo-fi Design and Prototyping	A15: Personas, Scenarios & Storyboards
Mar. 6	UX Research and Evaluative Testing Lab: Design Critique	A16: User Stories and Lo-Fi Flows
Mar. 13	No Class Spring Recess	
Mar. 20	Design Systems and Components Lab: Design Systems	A17: Evaluative Usability Testing
Mar. 27	Motion and Interaction Design Lab: High-Fidelity Prototyping	A18: Revised Scenarios/Flows
Apr. 3	Design Portfolios & Getting a Job Lab: Group Meetings	A19: Visual Value Proposition V2 A20: Design System
Apr. 10	Rehearsal Presentations Lab: Design Critique	A21: Final Project V1 A22: Final Presentation V1
Apr. 17	Group Meetings with Instructor	A23: Final Project V2 A24: Final Presentation V2
Apr. 24	Final Presentations	A25: Final Pr V3 A26: Final Presentation V3 A27: Peer Evaluations
May 1	Final Evaluation Due , Refer to the final exam schedule in the USC <i>Schedule of Classes</i> at classes.usc.edu .	

Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems

Academic Integrity:

The University of Southern California is a learning community committed to developing successful scholars and researchers dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and the dissemination of ideas. Academic misconduct, which includes any act of dishonesty in the production or submission of academic work, compromises the integrity of the person who commits the act and can impugn the perceived integrity of the entire university community. It stands in opposition to the university's mission to research, educate, and contribute productively to our community and the world.

All students are expected to submit assignments that represent their own original work, and that have been prepared specifically for the course or section for which they have been submitted. You may not submit work written by others or "recycle" work prepared for other courses without obtaining written permission from the instructor(s).

Other violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication (e.g., falsifying data), collusion, knowingly assisting others in acts of academic dishonesty, and any act that gains or is intended to gain an unfair academic advantage.

The impact of academic dishonesty is far-reaching and is considered a serious offense against the university. All incidences of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity and could result in outcomes such as failure on the assignment, failure in the course, suspension, or even expulsion from the university.

For more information about academic integrity see [the student handbook](#) or the [Office of Academic Integrity's website](#), and university policies on [Research and Scholarship Misconduct](#).

Please ask your instructor if you are unsure what constitutes unauthorized assistance on an exam or assignment, or what information requires citation and/or attribution.

Students and Disability Accommodations:

USC welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. [The Office of Student Accessibility Services](#) (OSAS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter disability-related barriers. Once a student has completed the OSAS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and accommodations are determined to be reasonable and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be available to generate for each course. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at osas.usc.edu. You may contact OSAS at (213) 740-0776 or via email at osasfrontdesk@usc.edu.

Support Systems:

[Counseling and Mental Health](#) - (213) 740-9355 – 24/7 on call

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

[988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline](#) - 988 for both calls and text messages – 24/7 on call

The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, across the United States. The Lifeline is comprised of a national network of over 200 local crisis centers, combining custom local care and resources with national standards and best practices. The new, shorter phone number makes it easier for people to remember and access mental health crisis services (though the previous 1 (800) 273-8255 number will continue to function indefinitely) and represents a continued commitment to those in crisis.

[Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services \(RSVP\)](#) - (213) 740-9355(WELL) – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender- and power-based harm (including sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking).

[Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title IX \(EEO-TIX\)](#) - (213) 740-5086
Information about how to get help or help someone affected by harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

[Reporting Incidents of Bias or Harassment](#) - (213) 740-5086 or (213) 821-8298
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions to the Office for Equity, Equal Opportunity, and Title for appropriate investigation, supportive measures, and response.

[The Office of Student Accessibility Services \(OSAS\)](#) - (213) 740-0776
OSAS ensures equal access for students with disabilities through providing academic accommodations and auxiliary aids in accordance with federal laws and university policy.

[USC Campus Support and Intervention](#) - (213) 740-0411
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

[Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) - (213) 740-2101
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

[USC Emergency](#) - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

[USC Department of Public Safety](#) - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-1200 – 24/7 on call
Non-emergency assistance or information.

[Office of the Ombuds](#) - (213) 821-9556 (UPC) / (323-442-0382 (HSC)
A safe and confidential place to share your USC-related issues with a University Ombuds who will work with you to explore options or paths to manage your concern.

[Occupational Therapy Faculty Practice](#) - (323) 442-2850 or otfp@med.usc.edu
Confidential Lifestyle Redesign services for USC students to support health promoting habits and routines that enhance quality of life and academic performance.