Interaction is at the heart of most digital creations: they may inform, entertain, challenge, surprise or offend—but in order to do so, they must first engage the user.

In this advanced interaction design course, we will expand our collective knowledge and boundaries of interaction design. We will explore how meaning is conveyed and interpreted through interactions that will go far beyond just the screen.

**Learning Objectives**

Upon successful completion of this course, you will:

- Apply fundamentals of interaction design to a design process
- Critically analyze designs and experiences based on various research frameworks
- Create robust interactions based on current and emerging interaction patterns
- Lead and conduct design workshops

In short, you will grow as a designer and begin thinking about design with greater complexity.
Course Structure

The course is structured along two arcs of the design process: creative discovery and creative envisioning—underpinning both is research. This process is fuzzy at the front, messy in the middle, and clear often only at the very end. As Charles Eames once noticed, “Eventually everything connects.”

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How to be Successful in This Course

Although there is no single recipe for success, the following mindsets can help you navigate successfully through this class.

**Embrace creative confidence.** Design is risky. No venture is ever guaranteed success. Designers rely on creative confidence when making leaps, trusting intuition, and chasing solutions that they haven’t yet fully figured out. It takes time to build (or find) creative confidence. By the end of the course, you will have gained more.

**Make the abstract concrete.** Making an idea real can reveal insights that mere theory cannot. Good designers have a bias toward action, creating tangible—not necessarily beautiful—prototypes. Getting ideas out of your head and into the hands of others is a necessary step toward understanding.

**Fail, then iterate.** Most education systems don’t do much to reward failure, even though it can be a very powerful tool for learning. If you don’t fail at something every so often, chances are you are not taking many risks. We often learn more from failed attempts than successful ones. You have my permission and encouragement to get things wrong in this class—even though you don’t actually need it.

**Reflect often.** You will forget most of what you learned in school. Learning is enhanced and made more permanent when you reflect on your learning and its meaning to you. When you reflect on what you learn, how you learn, its value to you, and what else you need to know, you’re more inclined to own and appreciate your learning.
Semester Schedule
The following week-by-week breakdown explains topics we will cover. This schedule is subject to change.

Complete explanations of what specifically is due, additional materials, and assignment submissions are available at canvas.unt.edu.

CREATIVE DISCOVERY · UNDERSTANDING INTERACTION

Week 1 — Jan 18
What is Interaction…
We spend time getting to know the course, each other, and what we mean by interaction design.

Week 2 — Jan 25
...Are There Different Types?
Is an interaction with a static object different from an interaction with a dynamic system? We explore (and attempt to break) models of different interactions with systems.

Week 3 — Feb 1
Design Beyond Vision
After popularizing the concept of affordances in 1998, why does Donald Norman now tell us, “Forget affordances. Provide signifiers”? Are there non-visual signifiers? Is it possible to design for them?

Week 4 — Feb 8
Design for All the Human Senses (1 of 3)
We explore how interaction designers create experiences for all the human senses and begin a research journey of how you might do the same.

Week 5 — Feb 15
Human Senses (2 of 3)
We continue our exploration of the human senses as related to interaction design.

Week 6 — Feb 22
Human Senses (3 of 3)
You will teach the class and present your materials on designing for our human senses.

Week 7 — Mar 1
Strange-Making and Speculative Design
We explore ways two ways that designers might innovate experiences: speculating and making the familiar strange.

Week 8 — Mar 8
The Illusion of Life: Animation Principles
We explore 12 principles of animation that bring the illusion of life to interactions.
creAtiVe envisioning • partner project

Week 9 — Mar 22  
Workshop

We begin the creative envisioning process for the NASA Astro I mission to be housed in the Smithsonian Museum. More details will be provided.

Week 10 — Mar 29  
Workshop

We continue our creative envisioning on the project…

Week 11 — Apr 5  
Workshop

We continue our creative envisioning on the project…

Week 12 — Apr 12  
Workshop

We continue our creative envisioning on the project…

Week 13 — Apr 19  
Workshop

We continue our creative envisioning on the project…

Week 14 — Apr 26  
Workshop

We continue our creative envisioning on the project…

Week 15 — May 3  
Workshop + Showcase

We wrap up our project with final presentation your possibilities and future-state scenarios.

Week 16 — May 10  
No class

Opportunity to polish and improve. Submit your final materials.

class engagement participant

Attendance is mandatory in order to participate in the class. This is a highly interactive course. If you’re not here, you won’t be able to regain the experiences you missed. You are allowed one non-excused absence. Any additional absences after the second without prior approval will result in a letter grade reduction off your final grade. If you are unable to attend class, let me know by email at least one day before if possible.
Grades

Students often think grades measure how much you learned. Only you can say how much you learned. In this class, grades reflect performance and quality of work.

**Grade Breakdown**

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10% Participation</td>
<td>A+ 97-100 4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Thinking Notebook</td>
<td>A 93-96 4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Assignments/Workshop</td>
<td>A- 90-92 3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 Reflection Brief</td>
<td>B+ 87-89 3.3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B 83-86 3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B- 80-83 2.7</td>
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UNT Policies

**Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences.** According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

**ADA Accommodation Statement.** UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

**Emergency Notification & Procedures.** UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.