

# ADES 4615 Topics in Interior Design: Materials & Specifications

*Semester: Fall 2025*

*Time: Thursday, 3:30 – 6:20 p.m., ART 260*

*Instructor Contact:*

**Name:** Jeannine Vail, Assistant Professor, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP

**Office Location:** ART 262A

**Office Hours:** Thursdays: 2:30-3:30 or by appointment.

**Email:** Through Canvas or Jeannine.Vail@unt.edu

**Communication Expectations:** The primary tool that will be used to communicate directly with students, will be the learning management system. Students should send personal concerns or questions to me through the canvas email tool <https://unt.instructure.com/>. CLEAR has a webpage for students that provides [helpful guidance](https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) (<https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips>) that can be adapted for your use.

## Copyright Notice

Materials used in connection with this course may be subject to copyright protection. Materials may include, but are not limited to: documents, slides, images, audio, and video. Materials in this course are only for the use of students enrolled in this course, for purposes associated with this course, and may not be retained for longer than the class term. Unauthorized retention, duplication, distribution, or modification of copyrighted materials is strictly prohibited by law. For more information, visit the [UNT Policy Office \(Links to an external site.\)](#) or [Copyright.gov \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

## Course Description

3 hours. Research on selected topics or projects in Interior Design. Course includes classroom lectures, speakers, as scheduled. Prerequisites: Consent of instructor. May be repeated for credit as topics vary. Satisfies advanced Topics requirement for Interior Design degree program. This course will meet the Council of Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) standards:

Standard 13. Products and Materials

Standard 14. Environmental Systems and Human Wellbeing

Standard 16. Regulations and Guidelines

## Course Focus and Objectives

1. Present design principles and strategies emphasizing green and environmentally-conscious materials, products and systems appropriate for commercial design projects as demonstrated through class activities, guest speakers, fact finding and documentation.
2. Students will prepare product specifications in a standard contract document format and product profiles using an attribute-based approach.
3. In the context of materials and sustainable strategies, students will examine environment and behavior connections including but not limited to biophilic design, health, wellness and placemaking.
4. Students will demonstrate competency in written, verbal, and graphic communication and organizational skills in daily classroom activities and assignments.

5. Through assigned projects, group presentations, and exams, students will demonstrate an understanding of sustainable design principles and strategies with emphasis on materials and specifications.
6. Understand and apply strategies for selecting materials, products, and material systems appropriate for commercial design projects, keeping sustainability principles in mind.
7. Understand and apply certifications and standards for materials used in evaluating performance, durability and life safety. In the context of green materials, students will be introduced to certifications and standards used in evaluating performance and establishing criteria including life cycle thinking and assessment.
8. Understand and apply material, and product specifications in contract documents
9. Understand the CIS Master format, and product profiles using an attribute-based selection.

"The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodations for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to the faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodation at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and meet with each faculty member before implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](http://www.unt.edu/oda) website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323."

## Required/Recommended Materials

### **Required Text Books:**

Interior Design Materials and Specifications by Linda Godsy 4th Edition; Available to students at the UNT Bookstore

### **Recommended text:**

Sustainable Commercial Interiors by Bonda, Penny - 2ND 14 WILEY; Available to students at the UNT Bookstore

### **Additional Supporting textbooks will be available in the Resource Room or UNT Library online**

LEED Green Associate – Exam Preparation Guide LEED v4 Edition by McCombs, H.C. (2015)

The Graphic Standard Guide to Architectural Finishes BuildingGreen Database (UNT Library e-sources)

## Communication

Connect with me through email and by attending office hours. During busy times, my inbox becomes rather full, so if you contact me and do not receive a response within two business days, please send a follow-up email. A gentle nudge is always appreciated. Office hours are intended and offer an opportunity for clarification. Design clarifications are more successful in a discussion during office hours rather than in an email.

## Inclusive Learning Environment

I value the many perspectives students bring to our campus. Please work with me to create a classroom culture of open communication, mutual respect, and inclusion. All discussions should be respectful and civil. Although disagreements and debates are encouraged, personal attacks are unacceptable. Together, we can ensure a safe and welcoming classroom for all. If you ever feel like this is not the case, please stop by my office and let me know. We are all learning together.

## Assessing Your Work

Unless otherwise indicated, students are to complete the course requirements as **individuals**. Any indication that students are doing otherwise will result in the maximum ramifications as allowed by university policy. In the case of group assignments, all members are expected to contribute to their best potential. Unless stated otherwise, a single copy of the completed assignment, with the names of group members on the cover sheet, will suffice. The instructor retains the right to have group members grade the performance of all of the other members of their group. Project work that is not presented or submitted at the scheduled final project presentation will result in a F grade.

Feedback may be given in small groups or the entire class. I encourage you to see me in addition to class feedback during posted office hours or arranged appointments outside of class, to discuss your projects, process and design particularly if you did not receive feedback or a design critique during class time.

General assessment rubrics are posted on Canvas. I encourage you to understand the expectations resulting from the assignment handouts and if in doubt, to meet with me and to clarify. Single assignments may be weighted within a semester grade. Please check with the Canvas gradebook and the assignment documents posted on the Canvas platform for clarity.

A = 90-100 %

B = 80-89.9 %

C = 70-79.9 %

D = 60-69.9 %

F = 50-59.9 %

### Evaluation Scale:

- A: (90-100%) Outstanding work exhibits outstanding effort and achievement significantly beyond expectation. Full understanding is apparent and communicated with clarity. Graphics and visual execution are professional, complete and communicated beyond expectation in comparison with the class cohort.
- B: (80-89%) Submitted work demonstrates above average work and exhibits effort and achievement with minimal errors in the design application. Understanding of concepts and communication is more than adequate. Graphics and visual execution and communication are very legible and complete.
- C: (70-79%) Satisfactory work exhibits sufficient effort and achievement. Understanding of concepts and communication is adequate but errors are apparent. Graphics and visual execution and communication are still legible but may have missing some components.
- D: (60-69%) Unsatisfactory work exhibits insufficient effort and achievement. Understanding of concepts and communication is shallow and poor. Graphic and visual execution is poor and lacks legibility and clarity.

Please note that you do not pass class with a D performance

**Disclaimer:** The instructor retains the right to change the course syllabus and schedule without notice,

but with an announcement on the Canvas platform.

## Course Requirements

The following exams and assignments will be made available to you in the course learning site, Canvas.

Requirements	% of Final Grade
Exams	50%
Assignments	30%
Participation with In-Class Exercises	15%
Class Attendance & Participation	5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Classroom Procedures and Academic Policies

### Attendance and Participation

Class attendance is mandatory. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what material, home assignments, schedule changes etc. you missed through discussion with your peers and checking the course management on Canvas. Do not send an email asking “Tell me what I have missed” without attempting a personal discussion. If you know that you will miss a class, contact me prior to missing the class and “just let me know.” This is good practice, keep your constituencies “in the loop.” It will be a good model for your career as an interior designer where you would inform your employer that you are not able to come to work that day.

Unexcused absences in excess of 2 will result in a final grade discount of 10% for each absence over 2. - Example, you miss 3 classes, your final grade is dropped by one letter grade.

### Attendance Record:

Attendance will be taken at the start of class. A tardy will be recorded for anyone coming to class 15 minutes late. Arriving later than 15 minutes requires explanation, and may be counted as an absence. The instructor will not repeat material missed due to absence. Students with more than 4 absences should contact the instructor about completing the project or course. Please contact the instructor in the event of extenuating circumstances. The best method of contacting the instructor is via email.

Participation and engagement will be part of the overall grade consideration, but shall not be confused with only your physical appearance at class. Some of the assignments including some reading and writing submittals are not letter graded but the submittal will affect your letter grade. The factors to be considered in studio participation include:

- **Presence** (showing interest in and receptiveness to course materials, be sufficiently prepared in terms of reading, researching of the project topic and have all material available at studio for discussion and to further work on your project)
- **Reaction** (elasticity of thinking and responsiveness to project critique, ask questions and respond to questions, engage in discussion with other classmates and the instructor)
- **Delivery** (appropriate project development and delivered as due dates and class schedule suggests, up-to date journal, 3d- sketches and study models at the desk as means of communication)

No late work will be accepted for a grade, but will be given feedback. Should a student fail to turn in all assignments by the due date, they will receive a zero (0) grade for that assignment. Assignments shall be submitted in a neat and clear, complete, readable, and understandable (to the Professor) manner. If I cannot understand what you have done, then you have not been successful. Submittals are typically due to the Canvas assignment-box with due-dates and submittal requirements indicated in the assignment-box and assignment handout notes. Canvas submittals are mandatory, email submittals will not be accepted. Assignment-boxes on Canvas indicate the assignment due date, submission details and file formats. Submitting to an assignment-box in a file format other than indicated in the assignment instructions will be graded "0". For example, use the file name **"YourName\_NameOfTheAssignment\_ADES3635.doc"**

Grades are posted through Canvas midterm and after the completion of dead week or when grades are due to the UNT records office. Feedback on your design efforts continues in studio during studio critiques. If you have been in studio, but have not been able to receive feedback on your assignment or project progress during every week, you have to make an appointment with me and meet with me to go over your design progress. If you have difficulties to identify your academic standing or need specifics on an assignment grade, particularly if you cannot find answers on Canvas through the posted assignment rubrics, make arrangements to see me in my office to discuss this matter. Asking for feedback on your academic standing the last week of the semester is not a good practice and will not be accommodated.

No make-up work, extra credit assignments, or anything else of a similar nature will be assigned. Just do the work that is assigned, turn it in on time and you will earn your respective grade. Focus on the assignment feedback and how that feedback will enable you to grow your knowledge.

Let me know, as early as possible, if you have trouble with the material, assignments etc. Contact me for meeting outside of class to discuss your matters. Ask questions during class. See me after class or during office hours. In short, if you are doing the work but struggle and need help, get it! I cannot help you if I am not aware of the problem. I tend to be unsympathetic if you share your struggles at the end of the semester and never attempted to get help during the semester.

I encourage you to submit work regardless how late you submit in order to get feedback and corrections on the work.

I do not discuss scores or grades over the phone or via email. You will have to make an appointment in my office. The topics and dates as outlined in the course schedule and the information provided in the course syllabus are subject to change (changes will be posted in "news/announcements" on the Canvas website). You are responsible to check the course management website. I encourage you to activate the "notification" feature on [Canvas](#).

### **Remote Instruction**

If community health conditions change and remote instruction is required, additional required classroom equipment, materials will be identified at that time.

### **Class Recordings**

Any (live) sessions in this course that are recorded, e.g., guest speakers, etc., are for students enrolled in this class. Class recordings are the intellectual property of the university or instructor and are reserved for use only by students in this class and only for educational purposes. Students may not post or otherwise share the recordings outside the class, or outside the Canvas Learning Management System, in any form. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action.

### **Acceptable Student Behavior**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct.

The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu>

### **Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Policy**

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, fabricating or falsifying information or sources, improper collaboration, or submitting the same paper/work for different classes without permission. Unfortunately, incidents of academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism, have been increasing throughout colleges and universities in the United States. Plagiarism occurs when you deliberately or unintentionally use another person's language, ideas, design or materials and present them as your own work without properly acknowledging and citing the source. The University of North Texas considers plagiarism a serious form of academic dishonesty. Avoid plagiarism by carefully and correctly citing your sources whenever you use someone else's words, equations, graphics, or ideas. If you are unsure of something and are worried you may be plagiarizing, come see me. Cite sources carefully, completely, and meticulously; when in doubt, cite. For the university's policy on Academic Integrity, please refer to <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>. Any act of academic dishonesty in this class may result receiving an F on the assignment/project/test, dismissal from class with a final grade of F, and even suspension or expulsion from the university, depending upon the severity of the violation.

### **Confidentiality Statement**

Programmatic information, base building drawing and documentation, electronic files, and other support materials have been provided for this class by a professional design office. These materials are for instructional use only and may not be mass-produced or distributed for any purpose other than to fulfill course requirements for this class.

### **Satisfactory Academic Progress and Financial Aid**

A student must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) to continue to receive financial aid. If a student Does not maintain the required standards, the student may lose their financial aid eligibility.

If at any point you consider dropping this or any other course, please be advised that the decision to do so may affect your current and future financial aid eligibility. Please visit <https://financialaid.unt.edu/> for more information about financial aid Satisfactory Academic Progress. It may be wise for you to **schedule a meeting with an academic advisor in your college** or visit the Student Financial Aid and Scholarships office to discuss dropping a course before doing so.

### **Student Perceptions of Teaching (Spot)**

The SPOT evaluation is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT and an important part of your class participation. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. Student feedback is invaluable for instructors in the improvement of teaching methods.

## Student Rights and Wellbeing

### Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities

Each University of North Texas student is entitled to certain rights associated with higher education institutions. See <https://financialaid.unt.edu/student-rights-and-responsibilities.html> for further information. Cases of academic dishonesty will be referred to University authorities. See [UNT Policy 06.003](#) on Student Academic Integrity.

### Course Risk Factor

This class has been assigned a level 2 Risk Rating, a course in which students are exposed to some significant hazards but are not likely to suffer bodily harm. Risks associated with this class include but are not limited to spray adhesives, fixatives, x-acto knives or other presentation materials. Students will be informed of any potential health hazards or potential bodily injury connected with the use of any materials and/or processes and will be instructed how to proceed without danger to themselves or others.

Students who are pregnant or will become pregnant during the course of the semester are advised to check with their doctor immediately to determine if any additional risks are reason to postpone this course until a later semester. Upon request, your professor will provide a list of chemicals (Safety Data Sheets are available) and safety issues for your doctor to review. It will be up to you and your doctor to determine what course of action to take.

### Sexual Discrimination, Harassment & Assault

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT's Dean of Students' website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs: <http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources> 0. Survivor student advocate can be reached through e-mail at [Survivor Advocate | Division of Student Affairs \(unt.edu\)](#) or by calling the Dean of Students' office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.

### Additional STUDENT RESOURCES

Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

[UIT Help Desk](#) [UNT IT Helpdesk](#) | [University Information Technology](#)

Email: [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu)

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 330

Walk-In Availability: 8am-5pm

Telephone Availability (verify):

- Monday-Friday: 8am-5pm
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday & Sunday: 11m-3pm



**Laptop Checkout available at Willis Library only:** visit <https://library.unt.edu/services/laptop-checkout/> for more info

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328) (https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)

#### Student Support Services

- [Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu/) (https://registrar.unt.edu/)
- [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (https://financialaid.unt.edu/)
- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services)
- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center)
- [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
- [Student Affairs Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
- [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center)
- [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance)
- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)
- Academic Success Center (https://success.unt.edu/asc)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (https://library.unt.edu/)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (http://writingcenter.unt.edu/)

## Emergency Procedures

**Access to Information** – Eagle Connect. Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail: eagleconnect.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 Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

In case of a building emergency (alarm will sound), please follow the building evacuation plans posted on each floor of your building and proceed to the nearest parking lot. In case of a tornado (campus sirens will sound) or other weather-related threat, please go to the nearest hallway or room on your floor without exterior windows and remain there until an all clear signal is sounded. Follow the instructions of your teachers and act accordingly.

## Course Schedule

Students will be notified by Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact the class. The schedule may change due to such impact.

## Retention/Reproduction of Student Work

#### Retention/Reproduction of Student Work

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer keys, written papers and projects submitted during the duration of the course



are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via Canvas is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual records; however, information about students' record will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

Some of the work produced for this class may be retained or copied for future use by the college, department or program. Students are required to read the policy and determine if they give permission for their work and personal image to be reproduced.

See the *Permission to Use Student Work* Form in your syllabus documents. A signature sheet is through Canvas.

Additional clarification: The Design Department has the right to retain any and all student work for NASAD (*National Association of Schools and Design*) and CIDA (*Council for Interior Design Accreditation*) accreditation reviews. It is the student's responsibility to document their work for personal purposes. Students will be allowed to photograph their work prior to retention.