

ADES 4523 | Section 501 "Advanced User Experience Design" | Syllabus and Schedule | fall 2026

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This course meets on Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:00 to 5:50 pm in room 284 of the CVAD Building

ADES 4523 students who do not read the footnotes in this document will be severely disadvantaged.

Useful acronyms that students will need to know the meanings of as they read this document:

UXDT = User Experience Design Track;

CVAD = College of Visual Arts and Design;

D-o-D = Department of Design

S.T.E.E.P. = Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental, Political/Public Policy

Course Overview

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Required Textbooks

- *100 Things Every Designer Needs to Know About People* by Susan Weinschenk;
- *Interaction Design: from Concept to Completion* by Jaime Steane and Joyce Yee

Recommended Textbooks

1. *The Laws of User Experience Design* by Jon Yablonski

Credits and Prerequisites

All students enrolled in this course must have already taken and successfully passed (i.e., earned a final course grade of "C" or better): the following courses: ADES 1500, ADES 1513, ADES 1543, ADES 2513, ADES 2518, ADES 2523, ADES 3503, ADES 3513, and ADES 3548. ADES 4523 is a three-credit hour, undergraduate course that is required for all UNT CVAD Communication Design majors seeking a B.F.A. in Communication Design with a concentration in User-Experience Design. *This course may NOT be taken by ANYONE who has not met its prerequisites, or who is NOT a UXDT major.*

A Brief Articulation of UNT's Non-Discrimination Policy

As members of the UNT community, we have all made a commitment to be part of an institution that respects and values the identities of the students and employees with whom we interact. UNT does not tolerate identity-based discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. UNT's full Non-Discrimination Policy can be found in the UNT Policies section of this syllabus.

Required Supplies and Materials

- well-equipped personal computers loaded with the Adobe CC Creative Suite;
- access to and working knowledge of **basic** prototyping software;
- at least 200 Post-It Notes™ in at least five different low chroma colors
- a 25' to 50' roll of inexpensive, white butcher paper that is 36" wide
- a "cheap" box of eight (8) Crayola, washable markers
- one (1) Bienfang brand, 100-sheet "Parchment 100 Tracing Paper" pad (9" x 12")
- one (1) Bienfang brand, 50-sheet "Graphics 360" pad (9" x 12")
- at least four (4) Sharpie brand "Fine Point" black markers
- at least four (4) Sharpie brand "Ultra-Fine Point" black markers
- at least four dry erase markers (these are the ONLY types that can be used on the whiteboards in room 284)

Course Description

Succinctly put, the intent of this course is to immerse first-semester, fourth-year UXDT students in a series of learning experiences that will enable them to

1. identify,
2. describe the contextual factors that "frame and affect,"
3. engage in the user research necessary to, and
4. *develop* and *design* the following:
 - A case study that allows each student or student team to learn enough about the particular S.T.E.E.P. value systems (and the perceptual biases these affect) of a specific group of people that would then enable these students to deeply understand *patterns of behavior*—and their *causes*—with regard to this group of people as they address or engage in a particular "less-than-desirable" situation or set of circumstances.¹
 - (Using the knowledge derived from the case study), a product, system or experience (depending on the individual needs and aspirations of given students, there could be multiples of these...) that would constitute a significant addition, or additions *plural*, to the UX Design portfolio of each student enrolled in this course.

It is hereby noted that, in some instances, case studies produced by student teams may yield products, systems or experiences that may be developed and designed by these student teams, or by people who decide to work individually, and thus NOT continue forward with this coursework as a member of a team.

Course Structure

This course is offered in a design studio lab format, and will meet for two, 170-minute class sessions per week (Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:00 pm until 5:50 pm) beginning on August 17 and culminating on December 2, thus satisfying the requirements for a 15-week course. Course content and studio lab etiquette during critical exchanges of dialogue between fellow-students and faculty are all consistent with the requirements of pursuing a career in professional User Experience and Interaction Design environments.

Under the guidance of the instructor, each BFA CDES: UXDT student enrolled in ADES 4523 will spend specified amounts of time outside of class—to be determined by each individual student enrolled in this course—engaged in developing and designing the projects and materials that support that student's endeavors to complete the requirements for this course. The first seven weeks of ADES 4523 will be devoted to students' engagement with the case study experience, while the final eight weeks of ADES 4523 will be devoted to the students' engagement in developing and designing the product(s), system(s) or experience(s) that the knowledge and understandings they constructed from their case studies will guide. Students must make final presentations of their work and turn in (or make available online) by 5:00 PM on Wednesday, December 2 (last day of course).

¹ Less-than-desirable situations and/or sets of circumstances vary greatly depending on a wide variety of S.T.E.E.P. factors: for example, a new student coming to UNT might find it difficult to (take your pick...) register for classes, park safely, cheaply and efficiently on or near campus, balance his/her/their course schedule effectively with a work, social, and sleep schedule; a parent with a four-year-old who has just been assessed as having some form of dyslexia or dysgraphia may need to learn to use a broad array of tools and methods for using them to ensure that this child learns to read and write well enough to "read to learn," especially as that child advances beyond the third grade; a person who has just moved to north Texas from Vermont and is living in a "house with a yard attached" will need to learn how to engage in yard care and gardening strategies and tactics that would not have been effective in Vermont but are de reguever here.

Course Objectives

By Wednesday, December 2 (again, students enrolled in this course will make the final presentations of their products, systems and/or experiences at this time in lieu of a final exam), ADES 4523 students will be able to:

1. Locate resources and means to glean *effectively useful* data-cum-information-cum-knowledge from secondary sources (scholarly and popular press readings, articles, and books, credible web-based material) that will enable them to identify and contextualize a less-than-desirable situation that is affecting a specific population group
2. Arrange the resources and means located in objective 1 in a manner that can be effectively organized into and recounted (and generalized from) in a case study report
3. As part of the contextualization that occurred in objective 1, classify and, as necessary, taxonomize and summarize the resources and means they located into an analytical report or “brief” that articulates key issues, or problems, that whatever they design—a product, system or experience—must at least attempt to address
4. Diagnose the specific “pain points” experienced by the particular population group(s) that impede their abilities to operate given scenarios-of-use and user flows, accompanied by an analysis of what causes these
5. Combine the knowledge and understandings they discovered and constructed from having engaged in objectives 4–6 to inform their sketching—or other forms of visualizations rooted in ideational thinking²—that yield multiple possibilities for prototypes and prototyping that can be developed well enough to facilitate user testing
6. Engage in a variety of types of usability testing that involve observing and analyzing the behaviors demonstrated by members of their target population(s) as they attempt to interact with a specific prototype or set of prototypes
7. Assemble what they deem to be the most useful, usable, and desirable—“U.U.D.”—ideas that emerged from the analyses they engaged in during their fulfillments of objectives 7 and 8 to design a more well-resolved version of a single prototype, or a single set of features and functions within that prototype, that can be viably demonstrated to aid and abet the efforts of their target population(s) to overcome the less-than-desirable situation or set of circumstances described in objective 1.
8. Present both their case study, with an emphasis on what they learned from it, and their definitive version of a product, service, or experience, or multiples of these, or aspects of them that can be effectively explained and promoted—or “pitched”—to a potential investor, collaborator, funder, population group negatively affected by the operation of a given less-than-desirable situation, etc.

Changes to the ADES 4523 Course Syllabus

The instructor reserves the right to make adjustments/changes to the course syllabus with or without notice as he/she/they sees fit/deems necessary as the semester progresses. The daily course schedule for ADES 4523.501 begins two pages hence.

² Ideational thinking is the kind of thinking designers engage in when they are endeavoring to combine the knowledge and insights constructed during their research and diagramming to generate multiple, iteratively developed, roughly realized prototypes or even fundamental ideas presented as rough drawings. Heuristics play a crucial role here, as the idea of engaging in “trial-and-error” and either abiding by or refuting so called “rules of thumb” have been shown to greatly aid and abet this type of thinking

Course Specific and UNT Course Policies

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ADES 4523 Attendance Policy

Good attendance and punctuality are expected for this class and will strongly affect your grades. Roll will be taken at the beginning of each class session. A student will be considered late/tardy if he/she/they arrives after roll has been taken. If a student is late/tardy, it is his/her responsibility during that class session to make sure the instructor knows that he/she/they is present before he/she/they leaves that particular class session. Each student will receive two (2) "free tardies" over the course of the semester. After the first two tardies, every two (2) tardies will equal one (1) unexcused absence. Only two (3) unexcused absences over the course of the semester will be accepted. The fourth unexcused absence will lower a student's final course grade by one letter grade. The fifth unexcused absence will lower a student's final course grade by two letter grades. The sixth unexcused absence will lower a student's final course grade by three letter grades. *A total of six absences, excused or unexcused, will result in the student receiving a final course grade of "F". Students who sleep during class will be counted absent.*

There are no excused absences for anything other than a verifiable death in the immediate family (obituary, funeral home notice or death certificate must be presented), or a verifiable illness suffered by the student accompanied by printed and signed doctor's note provided on his/her stationery with a telephone number. *Please note: the reason for the doctor's visit should NOT be revealed in the doctor's note, as this would violate UNT and state- and federally-mandated privacy laws.* The doctor's note must be presented during the class immediately after the one that was missed. *A receipt from the doctor's office is not acceptable.* A dental appointment—unless it was necessitated by an emergency—does not count as an excused absence.

Because this course meets twice per week, a student will be counted absent—and this absence will be unexcused—if he/she/they comes to a given class session more than 30 minutes late. A student who exhibits a pattern of not bringing any or bringing only incomplete work to a series of three or more class sessions may earn additional unexcused absences at the discretion of the professor. If a student comes to a class session without his/her assigned work for that day, that student will be counted absent. If a student is absent from a given class session, that student is responsible for contacting a class member in order to get any information or assignments that were given during the class session that was missed.

The instructor will not use any class time to repeat missed lectures or assignments. Do not—for any reason—call the main office or the Department of Design office of UNT CVAD to leave the instructor a message that you will be missing a given class session of ADES 4523. Under no circumstances should you leave a project with anyone in either of these offices for the instructor to "retrieve later." Neither of these offices will accept student projects.

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy o6.003, 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. [Insert specific sanction or academic penalty for specific academic integrity violation.]

ADA Policy

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 accommodation 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 (<https://disability.unt.edu/>).

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

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.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records 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.

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 Eagle Connect (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 [insert administration dates] of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IA System Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey, they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the SPOT website (<http://spot.unt.edu/>) or email spot@unt.edu.

Survivor Advocacy

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking and/or sexual assault,

there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940.565.2648.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website (<http://www.ecfr.gov/>). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

- (1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.
- (2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002>).

Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) he or she creates within a class and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

- The work is used only once.
- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.

Class Recordings & Student Likenesses

Synchronous (live) sessions in this course will be recorded for students enrolled in this class section to refer to throughout the semester. 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.

Academic Support and Student Services

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Mental Health

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

Student Health and Wellness Center (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>)

Counseling and Testing Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)

UNT Care Team (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>)

UNT Psychiatric Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>)

Individual Counseling (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>)

Chosen Names

A chosen name is a name that a person goes by that may or may not match their legal name. If you have a chosen name that is different from your legal name and would like that to be used in class, please let the instructor know. Below is a list of resources for updating your chosen name at UNT.

- UNT Records
- UNT ID Card

- UNT Email Address
- Legal Name

Please note: UNT eUIDs cannot be changed at this time. The collaborating offices are working on a process to make this option accessible to UNT community members.

Additional Student Support Services

Registrar (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)

Financial Aid (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)

Student Legal Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)

Career Center (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)

Multicultural Center (<https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>)

Counseling and Testing Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)

Pride Alliance (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)

UNT Food Pantry (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

Academic Support Services

Academic Resource Center (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)

Academic Success Center (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)

UNT Libraries (<https://library.unt.edu/>)

Writing Lab (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)

Computational and Technological Resources

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Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

Students enrolled in ADES 4523 are expected to be able to be adept at:

- Using Canvas
- Using email with attachments
- Downloading and installing software
- Using presentation and graphics programs

Technical Assistance Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a *Student Help Desk* that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: UIT Student Help Desk site (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940.565.2324

Telephone Availability:

Sunday: noon-midnight

Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight

Friday: 8am-8pm

Saturday: 9am-5pm

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm

Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

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

Course Specific and Instructor Policies

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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. Please visit UNT's Code of Student Conduct (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>) to learn more.

Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. Here are some general guidelines:

- While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.
- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.
- Speak from firsthand experiences. Use "I" statements to share thoughts and feelings. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or other individual's experiences.
- Use your critical thinking skills to challenge other people's ideas, instead of attacking individuals.
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.
- Avoid using "text-talk" unless explicitly permitted by your instructor.
- Proofread and fact-check your sources.
- Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type.

See these Engagement Guidelines (<https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips>) for more information.

A Brief Note on the Danger to Com Design, UX Track Majors Who Are Easily Bored, or Who Are Simply Not Particularly Interesting People, Embedded within a Brief Description of My Teaching Philosophy

To quote from Gloria Steinem, "Those [people] who are 'boring' have a high tendency to be easily 'bored;' those [people] who are 'easily bored' have a high tendency to be 'boring.'" The Com Design, User Experience Design Track is a major that leads to entry into a professional discipline that demands a broadly informed, deeply examined sense of self. In turn, the cultivation of this knowledge requires a willingness to experiment widely, to not work assumptively, and to be as concerned about the questions you attempt to formulate as those you attempt to answer. Those who practice it well enough to sustain careers and fulfill life paths cultivate knowledge and understandings from diverse sources, are well and broadly read, and are good at formulating probative questions that interrogate status quos across extant social, technological, economic, environmental, and political spectrums. They listen as well as they speak, and this enables them to develop the ability to engage in working processes that do not usually yield predictable outcomes.

If one of your primary goals in college and life is to "go with flow," "not stick out too much," "wait to see how everyone else is acting before you act," User Experience Design is not the major for you. (Hopefully you figured this out quite some time ago...) This is also not the major for you if you can't figure out how to disconnect from social media and other e-based modes of communication for the extended periods necessary to construct the kinds of knowledge you'll need to succeed in this demanding but richly rewarding major and career.

If you can't "go dark" for the few hours necessary almost every day to "get thoughtful work planned and done," you won't make it in Com Design. You also won't make it if you haven't matured enough to treat your collegiate experience as something beyond "13th grade."

I will teach this course on a daily basis as this semester progresses in a manner that will facilitate you and your peers' abilities to actively acquire and construct new, user-experience-design-related and embedded knowledge and skills. This means that I will come to class daily prepared to teach you, and also to learn from you, as we both endeavor to engage in the broadly informed, deeply probative processes necessary to not only produce the work this syllabus calls for, but to learn from the decision-making processes that must guide these and almost all other design endeavors. This also means that I expect each of you to be fully engaged—to be "power on"—as emerging UXDT professionals during each of our class sessions together, and as you engage in your coursework outside of our class sessions together. If you choose to be less than fully engaged, bear in mind that I reserve the right to devote the lion's share of my attention during class time to your peers who are fully engaged. In short, if you blow me or your coursework off, I'll blow you and your coursework off in return.

Finally, if you're coming into this experience carrying the attitude of (more or less), "I'm a wet lump of clay, so mold me into something that's more interesting and useful," you need to understand RIGHT NOW that I do not and will not teach in this manner. You've reached a stage in your learning-cum-life experience where doing exactly what the teacher tells you to do to earn your "A" makes about as much sense as trying to learn how to drive a real car on real north Texas roads by playing a video game that simulates this. Learning how to master the gameplay in the video environment will make you a skillful player of that game, but it does little to prepare you for the exponentially more complex challenges inherent in driving through the Dallas-Fort Worth-Denton metro area.

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