COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION //
This combination survey/seminar course is designed to help students enrolled in their first semester of study in the CVAD, Department of Design graduate program “MA in Design with a Concentration in Interaction Design,” or the “MA in IxD” achieve the following, learning-based goals:

1. ensure that they come to broadly understand how and why interaction design approaches and methods have evolved to yield the diversifying scope of interactive experiences available to contemporary user groups, and how these will affect the future of a wide variety of social, technological, public policy, environmental and economic initiatives;

2. ensure that they learn how and why interaction design is situated at the nexus of the internet, human computer interaction (HCI), visual communication/storytelling, and the operation of knowledge- and service-based initiatives fueled by a wide variety of socioeconomic, public policy, environmental and technological needs and aspirations;

3. ensure that they come to understand that effective interaction design processes are guided by ongoing epistemological and ontological inquiry, and that they are human-centered and goal-oriented;

4. ensure that they understand that effective interaction design processes must account for ever-changing meso-, macro- and micro-level technologies and technological infrastructures, business models, social constructs, political initiatives, and environmental changes.

I expect you to participate in your education by taking part in conversations and staying current with your readings. We will be moving at a rapid pace this semester and if you fall behind in readings it will be difficult to catch up.

COURSE OBJECTIVES //
Through the completion of course assignments, students will acquire competency in the following areas:

- learning to formulate and operate data gathering processes that allow them to analyze data gleaned from etic and emic field research methods so they can cultivate understandings about the relationships between particular groups and the interactive systems they use (etic approaches are operationalized outside a given social group, from the perspective of an observer; emic approaches are operationalized from within a given social group);

- the following foundational approaches and methods necessary to frame and strategically plan interactive experiences that prove to be useful, usable and desirable (and perhaps even delightful...) for specific user groups: the ability to accurately assess human factors, socio-cultural perceptions and levels and types of cognition;

- the analytical and evaluative capacities necessary to assess the relative efficacies (re: usability testing and data processing/management performance) of extant interactive systems and experiences.

Through the completion of course assignments, students will develop competency in the following areas:

- the ability to strategically plan and operationalize failure analysis processes and protocols to assess the design and functionality of (relatively) small-scale interactive systems;

- the skills and understandings necessary to effectively identify interactive situations that are somehow problematic for particular groups;

- the skills and understandings necessary to effectively account for and then analyze how and why a diverse array of contextualizing factors, conditions and behaviors cause or contribute to “what it is” that causes a given interactive situation to be problematic.
for a specific group;

the capacity to iteratively develop multiple, inventive and/or innovative approaches to re-thinking and re-making a given interactive situation so that it becomes less problematic for a specific group;

the aptitudes and capabilities necessary to effectively document their working processes, so that they emerge from this learning experience with a variety of means to showcase and, if necessary, “pitch” what they will have developed to potential collaborators, private investors and public funding agencies.

- the capacity to iteratively develop multiple, inventive and/or innovative approaches to re-thinking and re-making a given interactive situation so that it becomes less problematic for a specific group
- the aptitudes and capabilities necessary to effectively document their working processes, so that they emerge from this learning experience with a variety of means to showcase and, if necessary, “pitch” what they will have developed to potential collaborators, private investors and public funding agencies.

COURSE STRUCTURE //

This course is offered in a design studiolab format, and will meet for one, 170-minute class session per week. Course content and studiolab etiquette during critically dialectic exchanges between fellow-students and students and the instructor are all consistent with the requirements of pursuing a career in professional User Experience and Interaction Design environments.

Under the guidance of the instructor, students will spend approximately the first half of the semester engaging in a succession of week- to two-week-long learning experiences—commonly referred to in the User Experience and Interaction Design disciplines as “sprints”—that build their understandings of how and why particular approaches to designing for interactivity have evolved as they have, and how these have affected the development of specific types of affordances and signifiers. Some of these learning experiences will be informed by students’ critical examinations of scholarly articles, combined with assigned readings from their course textbooks, as well as simple-yet-informative (and carefully chosen) blog posts or other online pieces, and case studies.

Each class session during the first half of the semester will open with a relatively brief exposition/lecture by the course instructor re: either issues addressed in that week’s assigned readings, or issues that he feels students need to be apprised of/about based on various issues that have arisen as the students’ design decision-making processes have evolved.

Due to the relatively large size of this class—given the nature of the content that will constitute the learning experiences that must transpire within it—the “critical dialogue sessions” that will occur during the latter two-thirds of each week’s class session will involve intensive interactions between students formed into groups of four or five, with the instructor moving from group to group as each class session evolves. These critical dialogue sessions will entail each member of each group critically discussing and analyzing each other’s work-in-progress—as evidenced by the ongoing development of each other’s prototypes§§—and augmented by critical commentary and inquiry from the instructor.

The second half of the semester will challenge students to operationalize what they will have learned during their enrollment in its first half to guide the development of proposals—in the forms of low- to mid-fidelity prototypes—for new kinds of interactive experiences that facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and/or the delivery and/or transaction of services. The week- to-week structure of this course is designed to allow students to successively construct knowledge that they can then use to inform their design decision-making as the semester progresses.

Students will work in the studiolab as required, and participate in class discussions and critical dialogues during class hours and as they engage in assigned work outside of our Monday evening class sessions. Students will submit their work on assigned course projects for critical discussion in iterative phases as stipulated by a per-project development schedule provided to them by the instructor (this is articulated on page 7 of this document).

A tentative week-by-week schedule of course content will be available on the class Canvas site. This will be kept up to date and will always be the most current schedule for our course.
EVALUATION/GRADING
Each assigned project will be worth a specific number of total course points to individual students or (perhaps) students working in design teams. Each assigned project will be evaluated according to criteria articulated to all students on the day it is launched. How effectively each student/student team is assessed to have addressed specific project criteria will be recorded on an assessment document that each student will receive one to two weeks after the culmination of each project. The per-project course points each student earns as the semester progresses will be added together at the end of the semester to determine that student’s final course grade. A final project and final project presentation must be completed by the final class-meeting date and time for this course. There is no final exam for this course.

COURSE COMPONENTS //
Adobe Creative Cloud
In addition to the mandatory textbooks, you will be expected to maintain a Student license to the Adobe Creative Cloud. You should expect to maintain this license every year while in the UX design program at University of North Texas.

InVision Studio App
You will be required to sign-up for a free student account with InVision Studio App; a industry standard prototyping application. You can choose to use any prototyping tool you choose; however, you must submit your files as a hosted HTML webpage.

Interaction Design Foundation (interaction-design.org)
You are required to acquire and maintain a student membership to this organization. The cost is $8/month (billed annually at $96).

Projects
There will be one major project. Details on this project will be presented throughout the semester.

Late work is NOT accepted. Projects will be accepted at the beginning of class. If you will be late or absent the day that projects are due, make arrangements to deliver your work prior to class.

GRADING //
All projects or exercises will be due at the beginning of class. No late projects will be accepted for grading. You are responsible for turning work in on time, regardless of attendance.

Your final grade will be based on a strict average of all assignments. Your final grade will be rounded to the nearest 10th of a point.

A 100-90.0%
B 89.9-80%
C 79.9-70.0%
D 69.9-65%
F 64.9-0%

CLASS LMS //
Canvas (http://unt.instructure.com/)

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS //


Other articles as posted in Canvas.
ELECTRONIC DEVICES //

Cell phones, laptops, tablets and the like, can be incredible tools for learning and growth, but also have amazing potential to divert our attention and distract us from meaningful learning opportunities. With that in mind, I expect students to act responsibly with technology. Turn off ringers, be ready to respond to discussion questions, and not be a distraction to your neighbors or myself. I may ask you to put away electronic devices for certain activities or if I feel they are becoming a distraction to others. The bottom line is it is in your best interest to get the most out of this course and ultimately your decision to be a diligent student or distracted seat warmer—so use technology wisely. Please do not use class time to check social media, shop, or whatever else might distract you or your classmates.

STUDENT COMMUNICATION AND COURSE UPDATES //

All student communication and course updates will be conducted through the classes Canvas site and/or unt e-mail. You will need to monitor your unt e-mail for these updates and course communications. It is not possible or feasible for faculty to communicate to students via personal e-mail accounts, so you will need to regularly monitor your unt e-mail or forward it to an alternative e-mail account.

When contacting the professor, please utilize e-mail rather than Canvas messaging. If you need extended feedback please schedule or utilize office hours. As a rule of thumb, if your question requires more than a few sentence reply, please talk to the professor in person.

ATTENDANCE //

Attendance is mandatory. Only two absences will be accepted. Each absence beyond two will reduce your final semester grade by one full letter grade. So, three unexcused absences will result in lowering of your final grade by one letter, four will lower it by two, etc. Five absences will result in a failing grade. There is no distinction between an 'excused' or 'unexcused' absence so plan accordingly.

Attendance will be taken at the start of class. If you miss attendance, it's your responsibility to check-in with me. Up to ten minutes late will be acceptable, but will count as a tardy. You are given three free tardies. After that, every three tardies will be considered an absence from class. If you come to class after the ten minute tardy window, you will be considered absent.

There are no excused absences for anything but a death in the immediate family.

If you are absent, you are responsible for contacting a class member in order to get any information or assignments that were given in class. The instructor will not use any class time to repeat missed lectures or assignments. Do not call the main office to leave the instructor a note that you are missing class. Communication through e-mail is preferred.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY //

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an 'F' for that particular assignment or exam. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty.

According to the UNT catalog, the term cheating includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or re-submission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s), or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage.

The term plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the
unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

**DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATION**

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations 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. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to 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 see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at [http://www.unt.edu/oda](http://www.unt.edu/oda). You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

**EMERGENCIES**

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you 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). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your UNT account with current information.

**CHANGES**

Instructor reserves the right to make adjustments/changes to the course syllabus with or without notice.
STUDENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT //

I, ____________________________________
acknowledge that I have read the course syllabus for ADES 5410. I understand the course structure, grading, attendance policies, as well as the risk factor rating. I hereby agree to the syllabus and its provisions.

STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

STUDENT SIGNATURE

DATE

PERMISSION TO USE STUDENT WORK //

I, ____________________________________, am a student at the University of North Texas (UNT) and I am enrolled in ADES 5431, Foundations of UX. By my signature below I hereby grant permission to UNT to use, copy, reproduce, publish, distribute, or display any and all works created to comply with the requirements of this course in accordance with the terms set forth below. Additionally, I consent to the disclosure of the work created in this class as may be accompanied by my name and other personally identifiable information for purposes set forth below.

Scope of permission. This permission extends to the use of the described work and images of such work (1) for academic purposes in order to demonstrate examples of student work to current and future UNT students, (2) for public display in the galleries or on the campus of UNT or on UNT websites, (3) for promotional materials created by UNT in all forms of media now known or later developed, including but not limited to exhibition catalogues, direct mail, websites, advertising, and classroom presentations. My permission is on-going and will continue until such time as I revoke it by giving UNT three months written notice of revocation to the professor of record for this course. UNT will have three months from the date of my notice to stop all use in accordance with this permission.

Certificate of ownership. I am the owner of all work submitted in accordance with the requirements of the named course and the work is not subject to any grant or restriction that would prevent its use consistent with this permission. All aspects of the work are original to me and have not been copied. I understand that as owner of the work I have the right to control all reproduction, copying, and use of the work in accordance with US copyright laws.

Privacy Release. I hereby authorize and consent to the release, maintenance, and display of my name if necessary and any other personally identifiable information that I have provided in connection with the work and its use in accordance with the terms of this agreement.

Signature. By signing below I hereby grant the permissions indicated above. I understand that this grant of permission relates only to the use of the described work. This is not an exclusive right and I may sell, give, or otherwise transfer the rights to such work to others on a non-exclusive or exclusive basis. However, in the event that I do sell, give or otherwise transfer ownership or the exclusive right to use my work to another party, I will notify UNT immediately in writing through the professor of record for this course. UNT will have three months from the date of my notice to stop all use in accordance with this permission.

I have read, understand, and agree to the terms of this permission form:

STUDENT SIGNATURE

STUDENT NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

DATE