User Experience Design

Syllabus

HCDE 418 — Winter 2014

• Lecture Day: Mondays & Wednesdays
• Lecture Time: 2:30 p.m.-4:20 p.m.
• Class Location: Design Lab – Sieg Hall, Room 233
• Credit Hours: 4

Class Website
The class website will be your main stop for the most up-to-date information on the course schedule, assignment descriptions, and links to important resources. Class website is: http://courses.washington.edu/hcde418/

Instructors

Julie Kientz, Assistant Professor
• Email: jkientz@uw.edu
• Website: http://faculty.washington.edu/jkientz/
• Office: Sieg Hall, Room 423C
• Office Phone: 206-221-0614
• Office Hours: Thursdays, 11 AM to 12 PM

Jon Cook, Teaching Assistant
• Email: asbjorn@uw.edu
• Website: http://jonathanasbjorn.com/

Course Overview
HCDE 418 is a course on user experience design following the user-centered design process. The course is oriented toward practical methods for approaching a design problem holistically, beyond usability and usefulness. In this class, you will develop an appreciation for the notion of user experience including how to design for it and how to evaluate it. The course will focus on storytelling, sketching, and communication of design ideas within a design team and to potential users. Assignments will focus on hands-on learning through individual assignments, application of design skills in group mini-projects, and peer critique.
Aims
The general aims of this course are to:

1. Develop an appreciation for the theory and sensibilities of user experience design
2. Develop skills in the use and application of a variety of design methods, specifically applicable to user experience design
3. Improve individual and collaborative skills in design-based problem solving

Objectives
On the successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Given a problem setting, critically discuss the appropriateness of potential user experience design methods such as diary studies, storyboarding, experience design, etc.
2. Describe the issues and challenges to achieving a human-centered design process, especially with regard to user experience design
3. Develop an appreciation for the use of storytelling as a means of designing and evaluating user experience
4. Use, adapt and extend design standards, guidelines, and patterns focusing on user experience
5. Employ selected design methods at a basic level of competence: diary studies, mood boards, storyboarding, sketching, video scenarios, and experience prototyping
6. Create storyboards, video scenarios, and experience prototypes for a small system and plan and perform a real world deployment study of a user experience

Books & Materials

REQUIRED: Bound sketchbook with blank pages and a fine tip ink pen (can purchase at UW bookstore)


Tools

Canvas
Assignment submissions, discussions, and grading will all use the Canvas course tools system. The link for Canvas for this class is: https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/882160/

Mailing List
We will have a class mailing list, which you can reach via hcde418a_wi14@uw.edu. This mailing list forwards to the list for INDE 545 as well, so use this to communicate with the whole class. Feel
free to post links relevant to class or questions about assignments that may pertain to the whole class.

**Course Design Credit**
Many course materials are adapted from those of instructors of previous year’s courses and similar courses, including Jacob Wobbrock, Dave Hendry, Batya Friedman, Andrew Ko, Mark Zachry, and Jennifer Turns. Please do not distribute materials without the instructor’s consent.

**Assessment**

**Grade Distribution**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Worth</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Reflections</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assignments</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Mini Design Projects</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sketching Project</td>
<td>15%</td>
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**Graded Components**

**Class Participation (10%)**
By actively participating in class you can develop your professional skills for design. Here are some examples of how you can participate:

1. Treat all with respect – be constructive in all discussions
2. Come to class prepared – read carefully prior to class meetings
3. Be an active listener – be attentive, be engaged, use in-class technology with discretion
4. Ask challenging questions
5. Comment, build on, or clarify others’ contributions
6. Help your classmates use technologies
7. Post useful or interesting information to the class discussion list
8. Visit the instructor during office hours to chat, to ask questions, or to give feedback

You will have the option to submit a short (200 words or less) self-advocacy statement on how you contributed to the class. If you submit a statement, it is due on the last lecture day of the course via Canvas.

**Reading Reflections (15%)**
Along with each collection of readings, you will also receive a set of questions and things to think about while you read. Your typed answers to these questions must be both concise and thoughtful. Responses typically should be about 400-600 words. Responses must be based on the readings, not “off the top of your head.” Grades are either a check (✔) (pass) or a check minus (✔–) (no credit). Reflections are due at the beginning of class on their designated due date via Canvas’s discussion feature.

**Individual Assignments (30%)**
To give you opportunities for reflection and practice with specific methods for user experience design, you will compete three individual assignments. All assignments must be conducted inde-
pendently. Detailed assignment descriptions and instructions will be posted on the course website with sufficient time for completion. Unless otherwise stated, assignments are due at the beginning of class on their designated due date via Canvas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Worth</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1: Thinking About User Experience Design</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2: Look, Learn, Ask, Try</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3: Evaluation of Real World User Experience</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group Mini Design Projects (30%)
Design in the real world nearly always takes place with teams of people with diverse backgrounds working together toward a common goal. Developing group work skills, cooperation, and teamwork is an essential skill for students to learn who want to work in this space. Thus, one component of this course will be to work on two mini design projects in two different teams. Design teams will consist of at least 3 members and will be determined by the instructor. The first one will be to develop storyboards and a video scenario for a design, and the second will be to develop an experience prototype for a design. The design prompts for the design projects will be up to the individual teams, but suggestions will be made by the instructors.

The descriptions for the design projects and prompts will be posted on the course website. Each component must be conducted and submitted as a group and will be due at the beginning of class on their designated due date via Canvas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Mini Design Projects</th>
<th>Worth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1: Storyboard &amp; Video Scenario</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2: Experience Prototype &amp; Evaluation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Sketching Project (15%)
One of the goals of this course is to be able to think critically about existing objects and interactions and come up with ways of improving them, as well as come up with and communicate ideas for new solutions to different problems. It is also good to practice sketching design ideas, so that you become more comfortable and more experienced. Thus, in this class, you will keep a sketchbook where you will think about objects or interactions in your daily life and sketch ideas for how they could be improved. Throughout the quarter, you will be given various design prompts to sketch ideas. Some design prompts will have an open-ended topic, a theme, or a specific design problem to tackle, while others may allow you to practice specific sketching skills. In general, the purpose of the sketchbook is to allow you to practice communicating design ideas, so do not worry about the quality of your drawings or the creativity or practicality of your ideas. The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas. Futuristic, off-the-wall, and original ideas are thus welcome and encouraged!

On days that sketching assignments are due, we will also spend class time reviewing your sketchbook with your peers and receiving critiques from them to help you practice communicating ideas and giving feedback and brainstorming with others. Make sure that each sketch is on a single page of the book and leave the back of each page blank. Put the sketching assignment number (e.g., S2, S3) on each sketch as well. At the end of the quarter, you will turn in your sketchbook as well as a short write-up to reflect upon the practice of sketching, its usefulness in the generation of de-
design ideas and communicating them, and what you learned from feedback during the group critique sessions.

**Grading**

Each deliverable is designed to test your achievement against one or more of the learning objectives. Different assignments emphasize different learning objectives, and please note that some grading will be subjective in nature.

Each assignment description will include criteria for grading. It is the instructor’s policy that if you just meet the assignment expectations, you will receive a score of 3.5. Grades above 3.5 will be given to those assignments that go above and beyond the assignment descriptions and show a sophisticated level of mastery of the subject matter.

The following chart characterizes the numeric grades in words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Performance Quality*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.9 - 4.0</td>
<td>A/A+</td>
<td>96-100</td>
<td>Superior performance in all aspects of the course with work exemplifying the highest quality. Unquestionably prepared for subsequent courses in field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5 - 3.8</td>
<td>A-/B+</td>
<td>89-95</td>
<td>Superior performance in most aspects of the course; high quality work in the remainder. Unquestionably prepared for subsequent courses in field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2 - 3.4</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-88</td>
<td>High quality performance in all or most aspects of the course. Very good chance of success in subsequent courses in field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.9 - 3.1</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>82-84</td>
<td>High quality performance in some of the course; satisfactory performance in the remainder. Good chance of success in subsequent courses in field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 - 2.8</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-81</td>
<td>Satisfactory performance in the course. Evidence of sufficient learning to succeed in subsequent courses in field.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 - 2.4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>75-77</td>
<td>Satisfactory performance in most of the course, with the remainder being somewhat substandard. Evidence of sufficient learning to succeed in subsequent courses in field with effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9 - 2.1</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>72-74</td>
<td>Evidence of some learning but generally marginal performance. Marginal chance of success in subsequent courses in field.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Taken from Faculty Resource on Grading, [http://depts.washington.edu/grading/practices/guidelines.html](http://depts.washington.edu/grading/practices/guidelines.html)

**Class Policies**

**Academic Conduct**

The following paragraphs discuss academic integrity, copyright and privacy concerns governing student conduct at the University of Washington. They apply to all assignments and communications in this course.
Academic Integrity
The essence of academic life revolves around respect not only for the ideas of others, but also their rights to those ideas and their promulgation. It is therefore essential that all of us engaged in the life of the mind take the utmost care that the ideas and expressions of ideas of other people always be appropriately handled, and, where necessary, cited. For writing assignments, when ideas or materials of others are used, they must be cited. The format is not that important as long as it is consistent, the source material can be located and the citation can be verified. In any situation, if you have a question, please feel free to ask the instructor or teaching assistant. Such attention to ideas and acknowledgment of their sources is central not only to academic life, but life in general.

Please acquaint yourself with the University of Washington’s resources on academic honesty.

Copyright
All of the expressions of ideas in this class that are fixed in any tangible medium such as digital and physical documents are protected by copyright law as embodied in title 17 of the United States Code. These expressions include the work product of both: (1) your student colleagues (e.g., any assignments published here in the course environment or statements committed to text in a discussion forum); and, (2) your instructors (e.g., the syllabus, assignments, reading lists, and lectures). Within the constraints of "fair use," you may download or copy slides, recordings or notes for your personal intellectual use in support of your education here in the department of Human Centered Design & Engineering. All of these examples are copyrighted expressions, and fair use by you does not include further distribution by any means of copying, performance, or presentation beyond the circle of your student colleagues in this class. If you have any questions regarding whether a use to which you wish to put one of these expressions violates the creator's copyright interests, please feel free to ask the instructor for guidance.

Privacy
To support an academic environment of rigorous discussion and open expression of personal thoughts and feelings, we, as members of the academic community, must be committed to the inviolate right of privacy of our student and instructor colleagues. As a result, we must forego sharing personally identifiable information about any member of our community including information about the ideas they express, their families, life styles and their political and social affiliations. If you have any questions regarding whether a disclosure you wish to make regarding anyone in this course violates that person's privacy interests, please feel free to ask the instructor for guidance.

Knowing violations of these principles of academic conduct, privacy, or copyright may result in University disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct.

Students with Disabilities
To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please contact Disabled Student Services: 448 Schmitz, 206-543-8924 (V/TTY). If you have a letter from DSS indicating that you have a disability that requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to the instructor so you can discuss the accommodations you might need in the class.

In fairness to your classmates, academic accommodations due to disability will not be made unless the student has a letter from DSS specifying the type and nature of accommodations needed.
Student Code of Conduct
Good student conduct is important for maintaining a healthy course environment. Please familiarize yourself with the University of Washington’s Student Code of Conduct.

Quality of Written Assignments
As a graduate student in a field that requires excellent communication skills, this course has high expectations on the written quality and presentation of completed assignments and reports. Reports should be well organized, be thoroughly proofread, and free from grammatical errors. The use of appropriate, clear titles, figure captions, and headings is also important. Each assignment will have “quality of written assignment” as a graded component worth at least 10%. You can use whichever format you would like for your assignments, but please adhere to the recommended word counts (e.g., 400-600 words). If English is not your first language, I recommend you check out UW Writing Center at Odegaard Library: http://depts.washington.edu/owrc/

In addition to the above recommendations, all assignments should include the following information:
- Your name and email address (all names and emails for group projects)
- HCDE 418 – User Experience Design – Winter 2014
- Assignment number and name (e.g., A1 – Thinking About User Experience Design)

Attendance
Students are expected to attend class regularly. Although attendance is not specifically graded, missing a significant number of classes will likely have a negative impact your class participation grade, as you will have fewer opportunities to participate in discussion and in-class activities. If you must miss a class, due to an illness or other extenuating circumstance, please send an email to the instructor as soon as possible to make arrangements for a makeup of in-class activities.

Late Assignments
1. If you will have to miss a deadline, you should inform the instructor as soon as you can, indicating when you will submit the work. The instructor will try to accommodate your needs. You should use this clause only for extraordinary personal reasons (e.g., personal illness, death in the family, etc.).
2. It is at the instructor’s discretion to accept late work or assign late penalties (see 1 above). In general, late work is deducted 10% of its total grade per calendar day.

Work that is handed in late is penalized for two reasons. First, to be fair, all students should be given the same time limits. Second, if you spend too much time on one assignment, it is quite likely that you will have insufficient time to spend on subsequent assignments.

Contacting the Instructor
You are welcome to give me feedback about the course, to ask a question about an assignment, to share an interesting article or resource, to report that you will be absent from a class/lab, to request additional time for an assignment (because of significant health, personal, or educational matter), or similar communication. Please note the following guidelines:
- Email or before/after class are the preferred and most reliable methods of contact
- Whenever appropriate, please copy the class listserv with your question or comment
- E-mail concerning assignments might not be replied to if it is sent within 36 hours of an assignment due date
- If your question concerns your grade, please follow the re-grading policy (see below)
• E-mail that is sent on Friday afternoon or over the weekend it is not likely to be replied to until Monday or Tuesday of the following week
• If you do not receive a reply within 2 days or so, please resend your e-mail or ask about it during class

**Re-grading Policy**
To have work re-graded, you must submit a Re-grade Request within one week of when your work was returned. The request must be a single page, printed on paper or sent by e-mail. It should contain the following information:

- Re-grade Request
- The information contained on the standard cover sheet
- An explanation for why you believe you deserve a higher grade.

The instructor will consider your request. If the instructor is convinced by your argument, your work will be re-graded. If not, the instructor will send you e-mail explaining why. No re-grades will be considered for late work.

**Connecting via Social Media (e.g., Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+)**
Social networks and emerging forms of media offer new opportunities for interacting with instructors. You are welcome to follow me on Twitter (@juliekientz), as I use my Twitter account for primarily professional reasons (e.g., to post links to research, to post links to inspirational stories, etc.). I will only accept a LinkedIn or Google+ request from a student after the quarter has ended and grades have been posted. I reserve Facebook primarily for personal use, and thus friend requests will not be accepted until after the quarter and usually only for students who work with me beyond the course.

**Right to Revise**
The instructor reserves the right to revise this syllabus.