User Experience Design - Syllabus

HCDE 418 — Autumn 2009

- **Lecture Days:** Tuesdays & Thursdays
- **Lecture Times:** 10:00 a.m.-11:50 a.m.
- **Class Location:** Sieg Hall, Room 228
- **Credit Hours:** 5

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/](http://courses.washington.edu/hcde418/)

Instructor Information

- **Professor:** Dr. Julie A. Kientz
- **Email:** jkientz@u.washington.edu
- **Website:** [http://faculty.washington.edu/jkientz/](http://faculty.washington.edu/jkientz/)
- **Office:** Sieg Hall, Room 413
- **Office Phone:** 206-221-0614
- **Virtual Office:** Yahoo Messenger login prof_kientz
- **Office Hours:** TBD & By Appointment

Course Overview
HCDE 418 project-based introduction to the user interface design process and is oriented toward practical methods for approaching a design problem. The focus of the course is to develop conceptual designs based on the needs of users. Students will receive grounding in the following topics:

- User Research Methods
- Design Sketching
- Design Validation

Aims
The general aims of this course are to:

1. Develop an appreciation for concepts and sensibilities of user experience design
2. Develop skills in the use and application of specific methods in user experience design
3. Improve individual and collaborative skills in design problem solving
Objectives
On the successful completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Gather useful information about users and activities through asking, looking, learning, and trying
2. Organize information about users into useful summaries with affinity diagrams
3. Convey user research findings with personas and scenarios
4. Learn and appreciate the skill of sketching as a process for user experience design
5. Learn to give and accept critiques of design ideas in a constructive manner
6. Demonstrate skills for low-fidelity prototyping and describe the strengths and weaknesses of a variety of prototyping methods
7. Appreciate the process of user experience design as a cyclical, iterative process
8. Understand the differences between usability and user experience
9. Analyze an interaction design problem and propose a user-centered process, justifying the process and identifying the trade-offs
10. Prepare high quality, professional documentation and artifacts relating to the design process for preparation for a professional portfolio

Required Textbook & Materials


- Spiral bound sketchbook with blank pages – Can purchase at UW bookstore

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>
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<tr>
<td>Online Discussion Board Posts</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Assignments</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter-long Sketching Project</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Design Project</td>
<td>45%</td>
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Tools

GradeBook
All course grades will be made available through Catalyst’s GradeBook. The link for the GradeBook for this class is: https://catalysttools.washington.edu/gradebook/jkientz/11050

Assignment Dropbox
All turned in assignments will be uploaded to the online dropbox on Catalyst’s CollectIt: https://catalysttools.washington.edu/collectit/dropbox/jkientz/6570

Graded Components

Class Participation
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

Please write a 2-3 paragraph personal statement on how you contributed to the class (optional). If you submit a statement, it must be uploaded to the drop box by December 15th at 5 P.M.

Online Discussion Board
HCDE 418 will have an online discussion board to help facilitate discussions of topics and issues outside of the classroom. Participation in this board will graded as part of your “Discussion Board Participation Grade.” You must have at least 1.5 substantial posts per week (or 15 posts across the whole quarter) on a class-related topics (e.g., something more insightful than, "me too!") or your participation grade will be deducted. Discussion board topics will primarily come from the Sketching User Interfaces required textbook, although you can feel free to start discussions on any related class project. We will use the Catalyst Tools GoPost system for the discussion board. Viewing the board is only available for students enrolled in the class this quarter. GoPost Link: https://catalysttools.washington.edu/gopost/board/jkientz/12230/

Individual Assignments
To give you practice with specific methods for interaction design, you will compete the following three assignments. All assignments must be conducted independently, unless otherwise stated by the instructor. Detailed assignment descriptions and instructions will be posted on the course website with
sufficient time for assignment completion. Unless otherwise stated, assignments are **due by 5:00 P.M. on their designated due date.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Worth</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1: Look, Learn, Ask, Try</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Oct. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2: Storyboarding</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Nov. 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3: 1-week Real World Field Deployment</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Dec. 3</td>
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**Quarter-long Sketching Project**

One of the goals of this course is to be able to think critically about existing products and interactions and come up with ways of improving them. It is also good to practice sketching design ideas, so that you become more comfortable and more experienced. Thus, throughout the quarter, 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. For example, you will observe a door design you do not like and sketch how you might fix it, or a website you encounter where you’d like to redesign the menu. You should come up with at least 30 sketches for 10 different products or interactions (e.g., three per week). The focus is on quantity of sketches and not quality.

Every **Thursday**, you must bring your sketchbook to class with at least three new sketches. You will break into small groups to discuss and critique each others’ sketches and get feedback on your ideas. Take good notes during these sessions, as you’ll need them for your final report. In lieu of a final exam, you will write a report that reflects upon your sketching experience, its usefulness in the generation of design ideas, and what you learned from feedback during the group critique sessions.

**Group Design Project**

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, a large component of this course will be to work as a team on a set topic. Design teams will be designated by the instructor during the second week of class to ensure diversity and fairness.

The group project will consist of a number of different components, the full descriptions of which will be posted on the course website. Each component must be conducted and submitted as a group. The following components will be due by **5:00 P.M. on the following dates:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Component</th>
<th>Worth</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P1: Project Declaration, Team Form</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>Oct. 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2: User Research – Contextual Inquiry &amp; Survey</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Oct. 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>P3: Conveying Research Findings – Personas &amp; Scenarios</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Oct. 27</td>
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<tr>
<td>P4: Design Sketches &amp; Ideas</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Nov. 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5: Prototypes</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>Nov. 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>P6: Experiment Design &amp; Experience Sampling</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Nov. 24</td>
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<tr>
<td>P7: Final Report &amp; Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Dec. 10</td>
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Extra Credit
There will be an opportunity to earn extra credit by submitting your group’s final project to the CHI Conference as either a submission to the Student Design Competition or the Work-in-Progress poster category. More details about this opportunity will be discussed later in the course.

Grading
Work in this course will be graded to criteria. In other words, you won’t be graded on a curve. Each deliverable is designed to test your achievement against one or more of the learning objectives. Different assignments emphasize different learning objectives. Four-hundred (400) points have been assigned to the course and each component of the course has been assigned a percent of the overall grade. So, for example, participation is worth 10% of the final grade (40 points) and the group project is with 45% of the final grade (180 points). The following scale is used to map points to numerical grades from 4.0 to 0.7: http://www.onlinelearning.washington.edu/ol/handbook/grades.asp

So, for example, to get a 3.0 in the class you will need to 340 points and to get a 3.9 you will need 392 points. Anything below 300 points (2.0) will be considered a failing grade. The following chart characterizes the numeric grades in words:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Performance Quality*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.9 - 4.0</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>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>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>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>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>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>Evidence of some learning but generally marginal performance. Marginal chance of success in subsequent courses in field.</td>
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*Taken from Faculty Resource on Grading, http://depts.washington.edu/grading/practices/guidelines.html
Class Policies

Academic Accommodations
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 which requires academic accommodations, please present the letter to me so we can discuss the accommodations you might need in the class. 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.

For additional information, see Statements to Ensure Equal Opportunity and Reasonable Accommodation, downloaded Sept 30, 2009, http://www.washington.edu/admin/dso/

Academic Honesty & 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 circulation. 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 the source material can be located and the citation verified, it’s OK. What is important is that the material be cited. In any situation, if you have a question, please feel free to ask. 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: http://depts.washington.edu/grading/issue1/honesty.htm

Students are expected to work independently unless other instructions are given. Consult with the instructor if you think your work plan might constitute plagiarism. You should also acquaint yourself with the HCDE Plagiarism Policy: https://intranet.uwtc.washington.edu/academicresources/plagiarismpolicy.php

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 copy these copyrighted expressions for your personal intellectual use in support of your education here in the HCDE department. Such fair use by you does not include further distribution by any means of copying, performance or presentation beyond the circle of your close acquaintances, student colleagues in this class and your family. 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 or in the HCDE community 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.

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 at:

http://www.washington.edu/students/handbook/conduct.html

Quality of Written Assignments
As a senior-level 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 and headings is also important. Each assignment will have quality of written assignments as a graded component. This does NOT apply to the sketchbook portion of the sketching assignment, as they are intended to be quick and low quality.

In addition to the above recommendations, all assignments should include a cover sheet that contains the following information:

- Course name,
- Quarter, program, department, and university
- Assignment name
- Your name and e-mail address
- A date
- A web site address (if relevant)

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, such as due to the swine flu, 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.

Student Rights
Please read the HCDE statement on student rights:

https://intranet.uwtc.washington.edu/academicresources/studentrights.php
Late Assignments

1. If you will miss the 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. This does not count if you use one of your two deadline extensions (see below) until after the 2 day mark.

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.

Deadline Extensions

Because everyone runs into conflicts with other courses and commitments, especially with group projects, I will grant a 2 day extension on any 2 project deliverables without suffering a late grade deduction (not including the final class presentation). To request the extension, please send me an email at jkientz@washington.edu by midnight the day before the listed due date. Once your 2 extensions have been used, no more will be granted, so make sure you use them wisely. Note that this only applies to project deliverables and not homework assignments. Also note that there will be no bonus for unused extensions.

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 and office hours are the preferred and most reliable methods of contact
- For office hours, you can find me in my office (Sieg Hall 413) or on Yahoo Messenger (also works with MSN messenger) using the screen name "prof_kientz"
- 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 36hr of an assignment due date
- If your e-mail 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 don’t receive a reply within 2 days or so, please resend your e-mail or ask about it during class or lab
Re-grading Policy
To have work re-graded, you must submit a Re-grade Request within five days 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.

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