COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor: Assistant Professor Matt Dombrowski  
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Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10-12 noon  
  
Term: Fall 2014  
Class Meeting Days: T & TH  
Class Meeting Hours: 3:00-4:15 PM  
Class Location: NSC 0108  
Lab Location: Combined with Lecture  

Course Overview:

This class covers topics that are relevant to the design of usable interactive media for human use. The course is also about the process of designing interactive interfaces and systems given what we know about human abilities. This process involves developing a deep understanding of the task that you are trying to help people perform, understanding your intended users and what they need, and assessing the effectiveness of your design through careful user testing and evaluation.

The course is organized around weekly lectures and design projects that will take students through the process of designing a usable interface for helping people perform a complex task. The final project should be a portfolio-worthy working prototype in any form with a design and evaluation report.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course you should have a basic understanding of the processes in designing interactive user interfaces and systems for human use. You should also have a solid understanding of the usability design process such that you could effectively join a product development team in industry or a research firm that performs requirements gathering and user testing. Most importantly, you should leave this course with new intuitions about what makes an interface usable and how to change a bad design into an effective one.

Course Prerequisites:

The assumption will be that you have basic design and programming skills to create an interactive and visually appealing prototype. This could mean using commercial prototyping software (e.g., Adobe Catalyst) or at a minimum the ability to use HTML/CSS to stage interface images created with Photoshop. I expect that both members of the project team will contribute to the prototype implementation, so if you feel that you lack these skills, you should come speak with the instructor asap.

Required Materials and Software:

- Access to the internet and CANVAS webcourse  
- Microsoft PowerPoint and MS Word  
- Access to Adobe CC or higher (VAB 215 Lab computers may be used or Open labs in VAB 104 or VAB 146)  
- Digital Camera. IPhone and iPad camera not allowed for course content use.  
- Jump drive or portable hard drive and personal computer  
- Sketch book for creating and keeping a “Look Book” via sketch book or digital filing

Supplementary (Optional) Texts and Materials (Recommended Readings)
**Interaction Design: Beyond Human-Computer Interaction**

Book is available from the Bookstore and various online outlets—you should obtain a copy asap.

**Grading Policies:**

Materials will be addressed by the following methods:

- Lectures
- Online and in-person demos
- Online canvas Exams
- Critiques
- Web/Video/Text content

**Basis for Final Grade**

Your final grade will be determined by the average of your projects, as well as any classroom participation, online quizzes and lecture and lab attendance. Projects will be graded by the instructor on a numerical scale and will be based on the achievement of the objectives specified for the assigned project. Grades will be awarded both technically and aesthetically. The students will not be judged on improvement, but on the execution of the projects’ objectives. Plagiarism WILL NOT be tolerated and result in an automatic failure of the course.

**Grading affecting factors included:**

Attendance and Class Participation • Class Projects • Online Exams

**Project weights:**

- All assessments will be weighted equally
- Attendance/Participation. Attendance is calculated at the end of the semester and taken off final grade average.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessments</th>
<th>Point values</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>50 pts</td>
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<td>Phase 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
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<td>Assignment 2</td>
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<td>Phase 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid Term</td>
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Final Exam 100 pts
Syllabus Quiz 10 pts
Attendance See attendance policy
Total of 610 possible points 100%

Grading Scale (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>70-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-59</td>
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Grade Dissemination:

Graded projects in this course will be returned through the use of Canvas grade book. You can access your scores at any time using "Grades" tab in the Canvas portal. You will receive additional critique and comments via your canvas account. If you need help accessing Canvas Grades please see the Help button at the top right corner of this browser.

Course Policies: Grades:

Participation each week in this class is required to get a passing grade. It is the responsibility of the student to keep up with the course calendar and weekly workload. Students can find access to these weekly tasks via the weekly checklists and modules tab. Students also must participate in class discussions and activities when assigned. Interactive weekly information can be found at the bottom of your page in the course calendar. I highly suggest you take advantage of your calendar each week to succeed in this course.

The following information should help you understand what I expect to see in each students work and how I determine letter grades. This is more than a technical class; please treat this as you would any 2D or 3D fundamental core art course. You will find additional grading information on your assignment sheets.

A - Excellent, high quality craftsmanship and demonstrated motivation for pushing his or her own limits and explored alternative solutions. Student has successfully and creatively completed all requirements for the assignment and demonstrated outstanding competencies in the program by displaying creative solutions which possibly required additional research into the program beyond that which is already expected. Project must be turned in on time and in working condition that meets the written requirements before it can even be considered for an "A". Project and assignment has little to no improvements needed and student has shown a complete mastery of the objective at hand.

B - Above average, good work with obvious experimentation shown. All requirements for the project are met, and the quality of work is good to very good with evidence of doing more than necessary. However, the student left room for improvement in quality, skill level or both. Student hasn't completely shown a mastery of the project and has various improvements they still need to make.

C – Good, average, acceptable work with room for improvement. All projects that meet all of the project requirements and are turned in on time in the correct format will fall into the C category first, then studied carefully to determine if a higher grade is warranted based on the above principles. A "C" means the student has produced work, which meets all of the project requirements and is turned in on time in the correct format, but is lacking exception and demonstrates mediocrity. All requirements for the project are met, but with only the minimum effort, attention to detail, professionalism and overall quality. The student conducted no additional exploration and bare minimum was completed.

D – Student has produced below average work with an apparent lack of effort or incomplete work. Probable reasons would include not allowing enough time to complete the project, no motivation, a lack of preparation and research or not following directions. Also, work that is not turned in with the appropriate format such as .jpg or .swf to name just a
few. Projects that work and demonstrate proficiency in the program but do not meet the project requirements, i.e. a student turns in a vector graphic cartoon, when the assignment was to create a raster art digital painting. Invalid naming convention will immediately start the students grade at the D level, then further assessment on the project will commence.

**F** - Minimum requirements were not met. Student has not grasped content that was given.

**Workload and goals:** I hope each student comes into this class with a passion for exploring and learning new things relevant to their field of study. This class is structured to encourage curiosity in the methods and tools used to create industry level graphic design. Each student is expected to spend a reasonable amount of time outside of class each week exploring the programs even if only satisfying their own curiosity. The more time you spend experimenting with the tools, the better you will be able to use them successfully. I will not be concerned with the exact amount of time each student spends on the projects, therefore the time you spend will not be considered into the grade but the amount of time you spend will directly benefit the outcome of your project, which of course directly affects your grade.

**Submission Policy:**

Projects will be required to be submitted via web-courses. Students may find submission link under the assignment tab and then clicking on the due projects description. Projects will be assigned in writing and explained orally with visual aids. Projects must be turned in using the following naming convention provided on your projects sheets. Projects will be assigned in writing and explained orally with visual aids. Emailed assignments are NEVER accepted. Projects must be turned in using the following naming convention: YourLastnameYourFirstname + project number + dot + fileExtention. If this naming convention is not used, projects/assignments will result in a zero and not be allowed for redo. (Note: FirstnameLastname.jpg or FirstInitialLastname.jpg will not be considered valid naming conventions).

For example: if I were turning in project 1 my project would be listed as: DombrowskiMattP1.jpg

It is suggested to screen grab/print screen all digital submissions and online quizzes. This will act as your digital time-stamp in case of a technical issue. Make sure your screen grab contains a clear shot of the submitted file in its properly uploaded folder and directory with time-stamp. Keep these screen grabs for your personal records; they do not need to be e-mailed to me after each submission.

All projects will be electronically date and time stamped when submitted so there is no question about when the project was submitted. Projects can only be submitted once, so do not re-submit the project after you already submitted it. If multiple submissions exist on the server the first one submitted will be the one you are graded on. Make sure the project you are submitting works properly on Mac and PC and that it is in the correct format. Do not turn in a .psd file if the requirements are to submit a rendered .jpg image, this will result in a “0”. You must be in class at the time of the exams are handed out or it will be a “0”. The instructor reserves the right to turn a student away from an exam if the student shows up after the exam has been distributed to the class, which will, also, result in a “0”.

**Late Work Policy:**

I don’t accept late work. **Ever.** Late assignments will not be accepted. It is suggested to submit your files in early and not wait until the last minute for submission. You always have the option to resubmit files multiple times before their listed due date. There are no make-ups for in-class writing, quizzes, the midterm, or the final exam. Assignments and projects will be turned in during the dates provided on your course calendar.

Assignments, Quizzes and Projects will be turned in via Canvas assignments section. For additional critique, you are more than welcome to visit me during my office hours, listed at the beginning of this syllabus. Projects not turned in by the proper due date will result in a zero mark for the project. Class participation during lab critique times is expected and will be an important factor in your grade.

**Digital Submission Policy:**
I do not accept graded assessments via email, disk or jump-drive etc. All projects must be turned in via the proper documented submission area on web-courses. It is the student’s responsibility to test the project that was uploaded by either accessing it on Canvas, or downloading it to a computer to ensure everything is working properly. If your project does not work when it is submitted you will receive a 0, even if you have a working project on your own computer.

Extra Credit Policy:

- There will be no extra credit given.
- Grades are not rounded up, what you see on Canvas grades is what you get (no exceptions).
- Redo grades will be at instructors discretion. If an opportunity is assigned, missed projects or overly incomplete turned in projects cannot be remade for credit.

Grades of "Incomplete":

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. Your instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the “I” will automatically be recorded as an “F” on your transcript.

Group Work Policy:

This semester everyone must take part in a group project. All members of a group will receive the same score; that is, the project is assessed and everyone receives this score. The grading criteria are the same as the individual projects. Once formed, groups cannot be altered or switched, except for reasons of extended hospitalization. Rubrics can be found via your web-course Canvas course page under the assignments tab.

Course Policies: Technology and Media

Email Policy:

Students are required to check their Knights email account and Canvas accounts multiple times, on a weekly basis for notices concerning the course. Only contact the instructor using your knight’s email or Canvas messaging account. You will not be contacted through any other email besides this one (mattl@ucf.edu), or via web-courses on Canvas, so please, check each week before class. It is a good idea to set your Canvas to send all notifications to your knight’s email to avoid any confusion.

Emails must contain the following information to merit a response:

- Student’s last name and enrolled class number (DIG3811) in subject line
- Student’s full name (First and last) must be at the end of the email

Email response policy:

Emails that will not merit a response: (if an email containing a topic listed below is sent, you will simply be referred to your syllabus)

- Questions concerning information clearly found on your course calendar and syllabus. (i.e., when are office hours?, where do I find what i need to do?)
- Excuses for failing to upload a project on time (i.e. internet or program/personal computer based issues). You have access to the VAB lab all week, so be proactive and get your projects and assignments done early.
- A question regarding when something is due. Check your assignment sheet and your course calendar.
Please allow up to 48hrs for email responses. If email is sent after 5pm, do not expect the reply until the following business day. All emails sent on Friday after 5pm will be responded to the following Monday, so please plan your questions accordingly.

**Entry Level Expectations:**

All students taking this class will be expected to have successfully completed the required prerequisites outlined in the SVAD class descriptions. Also, the ability to be creative and artistic is essential to this course. SVAD Design courses are not just about programming, and it is not just about design. It requires a combination of logic and visual language. Any students who feel like these expectations are above their current skill level should consider taking other courses, or consider a different career path. You will be expected to research and try to problem solve before coming to the instructor for assistance. Documentation and proof of your research (i.e. notes, tutorials) may be asked for.

**Lecture/Demo Policy:**

I will be giving presentations, critiques, tutorials and demonstrations during class and I expect students to follow along and take notes as appropriate to each student. You are more than welcome to record my lectures. If you ask me a questions, I will often times have you refer to your notes first being that we might have discussed it multiple times in lecture/lab. If you have not taken notes, expect that I will not repeat the content to you. Please bring your notes with you during any consultation during office hours.

**Web-courses Policy:**

This course will heavily use the Canvas web-course page. Students are required to check their course Canvas page once per day to assure they are up-to-date on all course activities. All graded assessments will be submitted via the GRA3803 Canvas page.

**Canvas Site Breakdown (tabs found on the left side of your browser window)**

- **Home Tab:** Here you will find a course calendar. This course calendar contains a more detailed breakdown of your weekly expectations. You will find interactive links to your checklists and are expected to utilize this calendar, and its content every week.
- **Syllabus Tab:** Here you will find a breakdown of all the course policies and procedures.
- **Grades Tab:** Grades will contain your points for each of your turned in assignments. Further explanation of grades and expectations are listed below and in your assignment specification sheets.
- **Assignments Tab:** Here you will find assignment breakdowns, examples, naming conventions, and turn in procedures for your projects. To upload an assignment you must click on the assignment link and navigate to the upload assignment area (usually on the right column of the specific assignment page).
- **Quizzes Tab:** Here you will find access to any of your required quizzes for the course.
- **Attendance Tab:** Here you will find a tally of absences.

**Laptop Usage Policy:**

Laptops and mobile devices are for note taking and research/class work only. Playing games, going on Facebook and surfing the web for non-class purposes is not permitted. If caught doing so, the student will be asked to leave the class for the day resulting in an absence.

**Classroom Devices:**

Students are encouraged to both audio and video-record the lectures and demos to help further study the course material. Please notify the instructor if you plan on using any recording device.

**Course Policies: Student Expectations**
Disability Access:

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Ferrell Commons Room 185, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Recording Academic Activity:

As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the following academic activity by the end of the first week of classes, or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than August 27. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Students must complete an online syllabus quiz no later that August 27, 2014. Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid. The quiz can be found via your quizzes tab to the left of your screen.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is mandatory for the successful completion of this course. We will be covering a great deal of important information every class and you’re expected to participate throughout the semester. Missing a single class can result in missing skills and knowledge paramount to creating a successful digital media portfolio. Each student is responsible for signing their own name in the appropriate spot, and may not ask to sign in after the class is over. The instructor reserves the right to give attendance incentives anytime during the semester, unannounced.

- Total of **FOUR** absences allowed
- There are **no excused absences**. For any reason if you miss more than four days I suggest dropping from the class or pursuing a medical withdraw from the course. Please plan your absences accordingly no additional absences are given, no matter the reason.
- Each of your absences after that = auto reduction of -10pts for each additional classed missed
- Arriving later than 10 minutes to class will result in an absence for the day. If you are running late, I suggest you don't show up to class.
- Leaving class early will result in an absent mark for that day. Please do not leave early unless formally dismissed by the instructor.
- Students will be subject to grade deduction for failure to attend a critique.
- For prolonged absences over the four allowed absences due to medical or family emergencies students are encouraged to seek a medical withdraw from the course.

Sign-in Sheet Policy:

A course sign in sheet will be handed out each face-to-face meeting. Students may not sign in other students; this will result in dismissal for both students from the course and is grounds for additional academic discipline. Students will be required to initial the attendance sign in sheet at the designated time for each course. Students will be notified when role is to be taken.

It is your responsibility to sign the correct date of the sign in sheet. If you do not sign in (i.e. forget) or sign in the wrong slot, you will be counted absent for that day with no leeway will be given.

Example: Student with 4 course absences

- 4 absences allowed = **you’re OK!**
• 5 absences not allowed = One letter grade drop in final class grade. (A- becomes B-)

Professionalism Policy:
Per university policy and classroom etiquette; mobile phones, iPods, etc. must be silenced during all classroom and lab lectures. Those not heeding this rule will be asked to leave the classroom/lab immediately so as to not disrupt the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings. Students who habitually disturb the class by talking, arriving late, etc., and have been warned may suffer a reduction in their final class grade.

Academic Conduct Policy:
Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida’s Student Handbook (http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a record of the infraction being placed in your file and receiving a zero on the work in question AT A MINIMUM. At the instructor’s discretion, you may also receive a failing grade for the course. Confirmation of such incidents can also result in expulsion from the University. Students caught misrepresenting or plagiarizing course work will be asked to fill out the academic misconduct form. This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Student Originality Agreement:
All projects and assignments are expected to be 100% original by the student. NO TUTORIALS WILL BE ACCEPTED, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED! If anytime during the semester a students project is determined to be that of a tutorial, every project that has been submitted with the content from the tutorial will be counted as a Zero and result in an F for the assignment/project. If you are ever in question that your work appears to be similar to another, please feel free to contact me via canvas or in office hours to discuss your options.

Third Party Software and FERPA Policy:
During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need not make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Important Dates to Remember
All the dates and assignments are tentative, and can be changed at the discretion of the Professor, however Add/Drop, Mid-Term and Final Exam times and places are mandatory.

Add/Drop Deadline: Thursday, August 21, 2014 11:59 PM
Grade Forgiveness Deadline: Monday, October 27, 2014 11:59 PM
Withdrawal Deadline: Monday, October 27, 2014 11:59 PM
Thanksgiving Break: Thursday, November 27, 2014 - Saturday, November 29, 2014
Final Examination: TBD

Religious Observances: Students are expected to notify their instructor in advance if they intend to miss class to observe a holy day of their religious faith. For a current schedule of major religious holidays, see the Faculty Center’s main web page under “Calendars,” and for additional information, contact the Office of Diversity Initiatives at 407-823-6479.