

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON | DIGITAL MEDIA

User Experience (UX) Principles (DIGM 1376)

Instructor: Elizabeth Rodwell, Ph.D.

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Appointments: (virtual meetings only this semester): <https://calendly.com/erodwell/30min>

Awesome TAs (available to help you):

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Course Description:

History and evolution of UX research and the primary research methods used by usability researchers.

Credit: 3 semester hours

Prerequisites: Grade of C+ or higher in DIGM 1300 for DIGM majors

Required Texts:

• The Design of Everyday Things: Revised and Expanded Edition by Don Norman, ISBN: 9780465050659

• Understanding Your Users: A Practical Guide to User Research Methods (Interactive Technologies) 2nd Edition, by Kathy Baxter, Catherine Courage, and Kelly Caine, ISBN: 0128002328

(excerpts from many other resources will be provided)

Class Format:

Normally, we'd meet in person 2x/week. But this semester, we're going to do it first virtual (week 1 and perhaps week 2), and then switch to "hy-flex" mode. This is a way of keeping everyone safe during this relentless pandemic, considering our enormous class size. So, while attendance is required for each class, you can tune in via Teams remotely, or come to the room in person. I'll live stream the classes.

Please choose based on your comfort level. Recorded lectures will only be provided to students with a documented emergency causing them to miss class.

UH Email:

Email communications related to this course will be sent to your [Exchange email account](#) which each University of Houston student receives. The Exchange mail server can be accessed via Outlook, which provides a single location for organizing and managing day-to-day information, from email and calendars to contacts and task lists. Exchange email accounts can be accessed by logging into Office 365 with your CougarNet credentials or through Access UH. They can also be configured on [iOS](#) and [Android](#) mobile devices. Additional assistance can be found at this [Get Help](http://uh.edu/infotech/help) page: (<http://uh.edu/infotech/help>).

Email policy:

M-F I will usually respond to email inquiries within 24 hours. If you don't hear back from me within that time window, and especially if it's time sensitive please re-send the email. On weekends, don't panic if you

don't hear back from me until Monday. (Sometimes emails from non-UH accounts end up in spam, so please email from your UH account.)

Course Requirements:

Tests and Quizzes:

This course will have a Blackboard multiple-choice based midterm exam and a final exam. The midterm will cover all course material covered up to the exam. The final will cover everything since the midterm. Much (but not all) of the test material will be included in my presentations, which I will upload to Blackboard after class.

There will be weekly (very short) quizzes on Blackboard. These quizzes are open notes/open book and may be taken at your leisure during the week each is available. They will form the basis of the midterm and final, although questions not appearing in the quizzes may be used in the tests.

Assignments:

In addition to reading assignments, students will be responsible for the following projects, which we will talk about in excruciating depth during class time.

1. Heuristic Evaluation (Case study TBD)
2. Design a Chatbot (Persona Research)
3. Survey
3. Usability Test (Case study TBD)
4. Final Report

Grading System:

(Grades for each of the below will be calculated according to a rubric distributed before their due date.)

Assignments	40%
Final Report	20%
Quizzes	15%
Tests	15%
Class Attendance	10%
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Course Grade:	100%

Letter Grades:

A 94-100	A- 90-93	
B+ 87-89	B 84-86	B- 80-83
C+ 77-79	C 74-76	C- 70-73
D+ 67-69	D 64-66	D- 60-63
		F: 59 and below

Extensions Policy:

My policy on accepting late work is simple- I don't accept it unless you ask for an extension **before** the time it is due. If an emergency causes you to miss a deadline, I will ask you to provide documentation of the emergency in some way in order to turn in your assignment late.

Extra Credit:

1. Extra Credit can be earned by attending a (virtual) Houston-area UX meetup and doing a quick writeup. We'll talk over the options during class!
2. Extra credit will be given for participating in the University of Houston chapter of the Graphic Communications Education Association (GCEAUH). Students who join and attend association

meetings can earn up to three percent extra credit on their final grades (one point per meeting). GCEAUH officers may receive five points of extra credit on their final grades.

Blackboard and Teams:

All class materials will be posted on Blackboard and live classes will be on Microsoft Teams. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with Blackboard and Teams, for all courses, but especially this semester when online is so important. Please be aware that some of your grade is based on your being present during classes (in person or on video). Should you run into technical difficulties, please contact Blackboard support (support information is on logon screen).

The University of Houston is committed to student success, and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our [Power-On](#) website. Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including: obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, and Blackboard; requesting a laptop through the Laptop Loaner Program; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.

Video Rules:

Official UH policy: Access to a webcam is required for students participating remotely in this course. Webcams must be turned on.

My policy: When logging into a virtual class meeting, cameras need to be turned on – it’s so hard to foster a sense of connection when we’re not in the same place and having the camera on helps us connect. It also holds us accountable. But please mute yourself unless you’re talking. We don’t want to hear your toilet flush!

Recording of Class:

(UH official statement) Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the [Justin Dart Jr. Student Accessibility Center](#). If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor’s recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor’s recordings are not authorized to be shared with *anyone* without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

Face Covering Policy:

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, the University strongly encourages everyone (vaccinated or not) to wear face coverings indoors on campus including classrooms for both faculty and students.

Presence in Class:

Your presence in class each session means that you:

- Are NOT exhibiting any [Coronavirus Symptoms](#) that makes you think that you may have COVID-19
- Have NOT tested positive or been diagnosed for COVID-19
- Have NOT knowingly been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or suspected/presumed COVID-19

If you are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms that are not clearly related to a pre-existing medical condition, do not come to class. Please see [Student Protocols](#) for what to do if you experience symptoms and [Potential Exposure to Coronavirus](#) for what to do if you have potentially been exposed to COVID-19.

Consult the (select: [Undergraduate Excused Absence Policy](#) or [Graduate Excused Absence Policy](#)) for information regarding excused absences due to medical reasons.

COVID-19 Information:

Students are encouraged to visit the University's COVID-19 website for important information including on-campus testing, vaccines, diagnosis and symptom protocols, campus cleaning and safety practices, report forms, and positive cases on campus. Please check the website throughout the semester for updates.

Vaccinations:

Data suggests that vaccination remains the best intervention for reliable protection against COVID-19. Students are asked to familiarize themselves with pertinent vaccine information, consult with their health care provider. The University strongly encourages all students, faculty and staff to be vaccinated.

Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids:

The University of Houston complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for disabled students. In accordance with Section 504 and ADA guidelines, UH strives to provide reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids to students who request and require them. If you believe that you have a disability requiring an academic adjustments/auxiliary aid, please contact the Justin Dart Jr. Student Accessibility Center (formerly the Justin Dart, Jr. Center for Students with DisABILITIES).

Class Attendance and Administrative Drop Statement:

(UH official statement) Your failure to engage with online material (to show you are "present"); or make contact with faculty to adequately explain your absence by the 10th class calendar day of the semester will result in your being administratively dropped from this course. Being dropped from this course may affect your enrollment status and/or your financial aid eligibility.

Excused Absence Policy:

(UH official statement) Regular class attendance, participation, and engagement in coursework are important contributors to student success. Absences may be excused as provided in the University of Houston [Undergraduate Excused Absence Policy](#) and [Graduate Excused Absence Policy](#) for reasons including: medical illness of student or close relative, death of a close family member, legal or government proceeding that a student is obligated to attend, recognized professional and educational activities where the student is presenting, and University-sponsored activity or athletic competition. Additional policies address absences related to [military service](#), [religious holy days](#), [pregnancy and related conditions](#), and [disability](#).

Preferred Name:

If you go by a name other than your official legal name, you can get it to show up on your class rosters, Teams, UH email, and all communications with professors! Here are directions:

1. Log in to [AccessUH](#)
2. Click "Main Menu" dropdown list
3. Select "Campus Personal Information"
4. Select "Names"
5. Click on the edit button next to "Preferred"
6. Change and click save button

Syllabus Changes:

Due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, please note that the instructor may need to make modifications to the course syllabus and may do so at any time. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through Blackboard.

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Schedule of Readings:

*(All readings and podcast links indicated with an (PDF) will be available on Blackboard, in the Course Content Section).

Week 1 (Intro) – meeting via Teams

Day 1:

Welcome! What on earth is UX?
Syllabus Review and Blackboard Tour
UXPA and HUXPA, EPIC, Other Resources

Week 2 (Intro Continued. Why do Usability Research?):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. “What you see, some of what’s in the future...” (PDF)
2. Al-Awar, Chapanis, Ford: “Tutorials for the First-Time Computer User.” (1981) PDF
3. Norman: “Design Principles for Human-Computer Interfaces.” (1983) (PDF)

The Nielsen-Norman group
Usability Issues

Day 2:

Reading:

1. Ch 1 in The Design of Everyday Things and
2. Understanding your Users Ch. 1

Week 3 (Heuristics and Other Options):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Ch 1 in Observing the User Experience Also skim Ch 2 (but don’t do the test) (PDF)
2. Understanding your Users p. 434-5

Day 2:

Reading:

1. Ch 2 in The Design of Everyday Things
2. Understanding your Users Ch. 5

Quiz posted on Blackboard

Week 4 (Personas and Human Observation 1):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Ch 3 in Observing the User Experience (PDF) and
2. Understanding your Users- the rest of Ch 14

To-Do: Start Heuristic Evaluation

Day 2:

Reading:

1. Ch 3 in The Design of Everyday Things
2. Understanding your Users- Ch 2, p. 25-35;
3. Skim: Mirror for Humanity, Ch. 1, What is Anthropology? (PDF)

Quiz posted on Blackboard

Week 5 (Human Observation 2):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Understanding your Users - Rest of Ch 2;
2. Practical Ethnography Excerpt (PDF)

Day 2:

*No reading. Catch-up day.

Quiz posted on Blackboard

To-do: Submit Heuristic Eval on Blackboard
Chatbot Persona Assignment handed out

Week 6 (Survey Methods):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Ch 4 in The Design of Everyday Things
2. Ch 9 in Observing the User Experience (PDF)

Day 2:

Reading:

1. When to use which UX Method (PDF)

2. Ethnography in the Field of Design (PDF)
3. (Optional): “Chatbots for Customer Service: User Experience and Motivation” (PDF)

Quiz posted on Blackboard

Week 7 (Let’s Talk Interviewing):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Quantitative Research for the Qualitative Researcher Ch 1-2 (PDF);
2. “Kill Your Personas”: <https://medium.com/microsoft-design/kill-your-personas-1c332d4908cc>
3. (Optional) Ch 12 in Observing the User Experience (PDF)

Day 2:

Reading:

1. Ch 5 in The Design of Everyday Things and
2. (optional) Understanding your Users Ch 10.

Week 8 (Journey/Experience Mapping):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Ch 6 in The Design of Everyday Things and
2. Chapter 9 in Understanding Your Users

Review

Day 2:

Test #1 (During Class Time)

To-do: Submit Persona

Week 9 (Spring Break)

Nada. Just a break.

Week 10 (User Experiences):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Ch 7 in The Design of Everyday Things and

2. Ch 10-11 in Mapping Experiences (PDF)
3. (Optional): Ch 7 in Dewalt and Dewalt "Informal Interviewing" (PDF)

***Usability Test Assignment Passed Out**

Day 2:

Reading:

1. The Basics: What Makes a Killer Journey Map (from CX That Sings) (PDF)
2. Mapping Experiences (Excerpt) (PDF)
3. Optional: The Journey Mapping Playbook (see what a journey mapping workshop could look like)

Quiz posted on Blackboard

Week 11 (Ethnography/Field Studies):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Ch. 3 in Understanding your Users (Ethics),
2. AAA Ethics Code, IRBs (Linked From Blackboard)

Day 2:

Reading:

1. Ethnography in the Field of Design (Wasson) (PDF) &
2. skim Understanding Your Users Ch 6

Quiz posted on Blackboard

Week 12 (Catch Up and Card Sorting):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Ch 13 in Understanding your Users and
2. Anthro stuff (PDF)

Day 2:

Reading:

1. Ch 11 in Understanding Your Users (Card Sorting)
2. Shneiderman "Direct Manipulation: A Step Beyond Programming Languages" (!983) (PDF)

To-do: Submit Usability Test Assignment

Week 13 (Card Sorting and Focus Groups):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Gould, Lewis: "Designing for Usability: Key Principles and What Designers Think." (1985) (PDF)
2. Bergman, Johnson: "Towards Accessible Human-Computer Interaction." (1997) (PDF)

Viewing: Design Disruptors (by InVision) during class time

***Final Assignment Passed Out**

Day 2:

Reading:

1. Ch 12 in Understanding Your Users (Focus Groups).
2. Sato and Salvador "Playacting and Focus Troupes" (PDF)

In-class Card Sorting Activity via Miro? (We'll see if we can pull this off.)

Quiz posted on Blackboard

Week 14 (A Very Brief Intro to Design Thinking):

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Ch. 1 in The Design Thinking Playbook (PDF);
2. Ch 4 in Design Thinking: Process and Methods (PDF)

Day 2

Reading:

1. Ch 2 and Ch 5 in Design Thinking: Process and Methods (PDF)

Quiz posted on Blackboard

Week 15 (Reporting Out/Delivering Outcomes)

Day 1:

Reading:

1. Ch 15 in Understanding Your Users (Wrapping Up)

Day 2:

Reading:

1. Ch 4 in Design Thinking: Process and Methods (PDF)

Quiz posted on Blackboard

Week 16 (Wrapping Up):

Day 1:

Review

Day 2:

***Second test**

***Final Project due**

p.s. Helpful UH links

COVID-19 Updates: <https://uh.edu/covid-19/>

Coogs Care: <https://www.uh.edu/dsaes/coogscare/>

Laptop Checkout Requests: <https://www.uh.edu/infotech/about/planning/off-campus/index.php#do-you-need-a-laptop>

Health FAQs: <https://uh.edu/covid-19/faq/health-wellness-prevention-faqs/>

Student Health Center: <https://uh.edu/class/english/lcc/current-students/student-health-center/index.php>