

Syllabus LMC 3710 B

Interaction Design

Fall 2026

Course Meeting:

Monday/Wednesday 2:00 – 3:15 pm in Skiles 346

Instructor Info:

Dr. Heidi Biggs

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Office 314b TSRB

Office Hours – by appointment – <https://calendly.com/hbiggs7/30min>

Important Links

- Schedule
- Figma
- Decks

Course Description

Interaction Design is designing how people interact with technology. This class strategically focuses on screen-based interfaces, with some special topics. This class approaches design as a practice and asks students to *learn by doing*. The class executes the design process from problem framing to high fidelity execution of design concepts. We also explore the philosophical and world-building nature of design by touching on issues of technological mediation and speculative world building. Other skills learned will be

designing methods for testing designs, practicing giving constructive feedback, and iterating design concepts.

Goals

The projected learning outcomes of this course are:

- Understand concepts of interaction design like affordances, accessibility, and useability testing, critique, and iteration.
- Evaluate interfaces using think aloud, paper prototype, and accessibility evaluations
- Understand the design process from moving from problem framing, to ideation, to refined interface.
- Analyze and evaluate existing user interfaces to find places for improvement.
- Iterate and refine the design of interfaces on the basis of evaluation results.
- Understand critical and emerging challenges in interaction design.
- Understand the world building and mediating nature of technologies and how design can shape / is shaped by current events and probable futures.

Teaching Philosophy

As a designer myself, my approach to teaching strives to embrace learning pedagogy that reflects the design process. Therefore, I strive to structure learning through hands-on activities, ideation, and refinement of concepts through iteration and reflection. As a critical design researcher, I also strive to teach design in ways that connects philosophy of technology, critical and speculative design, and design practice. Therefore, I bring some theory into the design classroom by introducing theoretical concepts that can be connected with design practice. I seek to build an ethos of critical making, offer safe spaces to be vulnerable to try and fail, and ultimately give students the confidence to take risks and be creative.

Textbook

[About Face: The Essentials of Interaction Design, 2014 editions](#)

You can read this book online for free with a GT login. When it asks for your institution, enter “Georgia Tech Library”.

Additional readings will be provided online.

Suggested Supplies

- Sketchbook
- Sticky notes
- Writing utensil
- Laptop or the like

Schedule

Due dates and readings are shown in the Schedule. Unless otherwise specified, assignments and readings are due before the start of class on the due date listed. Stay tuned for announcements or edits to the Schedule as the semester progresses if assignments need to be shifted around a little for time or due to unforeseen events.

Grading

Grading of each assignment is based on points. The number of points for an assignment indicates its weight in determining the final grade. Assignments are due at the beginning of class unless otherwise specified. Some assignments are more like 'check points', and some are more like big evaluations at the end of a long process. I will explain the goal of each assignment as we go, but the checkpoints are designed to help you move through a process, while the bigger assignments are designed to 'test' competencies.

Late assignments will be docked by 10% starting the morning after the assignment is due, and 2% each day thereafter. The docking of the grade will stop at 50%, and you will always have the chance to make up an assignment @ 50% of the grade.

1. IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING and want to work with me on a plan for late work (say you missed a lot) we can work something out.
2. If you need to miss class for reasons like a family emergency, health issues, or something urgent and emerging, simply reach out to me to let me know. We can also create a plan for the late assignments in this case.

If you have to miss class for a valid reason such as illness, family emergency, etc., please proactively coordinate with me in advance to find an alternative make up assignment, which could take a different form than the original assignment.

Grade Ranges

A: 90 – 100%

B: 80 – 89%

C: 70 – 79%

D: 60 – 69%

F: 0 – 59%

Course Grade Break Down and Description of Projects (200 points total):

Intro (10)

- Example of IxD (5)
- UI Element Scavenger Hunt (5)

One Button (10)

In this project, we will craft a one-button UI to play with and push the limits of digital interaction and to become familiar with figma.

- One Button UI v1 (5)
- One button UI v2 (5)

P1: AI in IxD (60)

In this project, we will learn about technological mediation and intervention through critically addressing concerns or limits with a current-day AI product or service. We will learn about problem framing, personas and scenarios, UX wireframing, design systems, and ultimately develop a clickable, high fidelity UI in figma.

- AI 0: Mediating Morality Reading Response (5 p/f)

- AI 1: Problem Framing Presentation (15)
- AI 2: UI Brainstorm and Paper Prototypes (15)
- AI 3: UI & Design System v1 (5 p/f)
- AI 4: 3 Usability Feedback Tests
- AI 5: Presentation and Final Prototype (20)

P2: World Building (100)

In this project, we construct a future scenario or near-world scenario that explores the relationship between design and world building. The final deliverable is a designed system / interface that is embedded in a narrative from the world through some kind of storytelling medium: film, comic, aesthetic deck, photos, etc.

- WB 0: Speculative Everything Reading Response (5 p/f)
- WB 1: Final World Presentation and what interaction you will build from this world, persona, scenario, timeline (15)
- WB 2: Sketches that showcase 1) wireframes and 2) storyboard/outline of narrative and a Visual Language/Mood Board (20)
- WB 3: Rough Draft (10 p/f)
- WB 4: Final Project UI v2 Final Project Presentation (40)

Wrap up: Portfolio and Reflection (20)

A final point of reflection on the class and chance to turn get points for transferring your hard work to your portfolio.

- 400-word reflection (10)
- One project from class translated into a portfolio piece (10)

Attendance Policy

I will not track attendance, but a great deal of the class is graded through presenting and sharing work. If you cannot be in class to present your work, please email me in advance and we can work out alternatives. Please also work let your teammates know if you are on a team. If you miss class without an explanation and can't present your work, your assignment will be counted late.

PLEASE DON'T COME TO CLASS SICK. I personally get covid quite easily (for whatever reason) and I have asthma. The flu is going around and seems quite brutal. I will make sure

that you are not penalized for missing class and for being sick. Other acceptable reasons for missing class are educational or professional conflicts, family emergencies, health issues, etc. Discuss with me ahead of time and we will find a way.

Possible workarounds for being sick include prerecording your presentation with [LOOM](#) or even presenting via Teams if we have enough time to set up a meeting before class.

Accommodations

Please refer to the Office of Disability Services for information on how to request accommodations. The instructor and TA are committed to working with you to accommodate your needs. Communicating with us about your needs will assist us in best accommodating your needs.

Technology use

Bring a computer to class every day. No use of cell phones (including texting) in class.

Inclusivity Statement

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts is committed to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those in our community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.

Workload

Students are expected to work not only in class but also outside of class sessions on assignments and projects. For every one hour of class time, expect 3 hours of out of class time. If you are experiencing more than this, feel free to discuss with Dr. Biggs and we can craft some strategies for work life balance.

Mental Health

If you are experiencing anxiety or depression or a medical, personal, or family crisis, or if you just feel overwhelmed, please do not hesitate to reach out for help. Everybody needs help sometimes, and college can be a personally challenging time. You are not alone, and many of us are available to be sympathetic listeners and to share our own strategies for

coping with stressful situations. In addition, professional counselors and medical practitioners have expertise that can be very helpful.

If you are struggling with any level of mental health issues, there are resources available on campus. Between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. you can walk into Smithgate Hall 238, or there are services available by phone 24/7 if you call 404-894-2575. More information is at: <https://mentalhealth.gatech.edu/>

Student Resources

The Dean of Students has a list of services (see <https://studentlife.gatech.edu/content/get-help-now> Links to an external site.).

Additional Resources

If you are the victim of sexual misconduct or harassment, resources are listed at: <https://diversity.gatech.edu/equitycompliance/reporting-options/i-want-report-incident>)

VOICE Advocates also serve as confidential resources for victim-survivors (speaking to them does not trigger an official reporting process): <https://wellnesscenter.gatech.edu/voice>

Library Resources

The GT Library has numerous resources, gadget rental, study space, activities, and more.

Georgia Tech Honor Code

[The Georgia Tech Honor Code](#) will be strictly enforced.

Comm Lab

This is a helpful resource available to you: [Communication Center](#).

ChatGPT and other Generative AI Tools Policy

I want to acknowledge that we are still in a period where there are not clear norms about how to use ChatGPT and other generative AI tools. This policy may get updated over the

semester as we all learn about different uses of these tools or encounter them in new situations.

My pedagogical position:

1. On the value of writing and creating:

I urge the students of this class to turn to themselves for answers whenever they can and pride yourself in struggling to understand and grapple with material on your own. I say this mostly in regard to writing because I love writing. Every time I write or make, I learn something new. Writing and making are alchemical acts. They are of playing, constructing, discovering, wandering, and coming to know yourself and your beliefs.

Feminist scholar Helen Cixous claims writing is a radical feminist act – speaking one's own embodied truth struck up from the place of the unconscious can break normative paradigms. Similar radical affirmations have been shared by Audre Lorde in her discussions of poetry. Writing and creating, having a voice, being willing to be seen and heard and having the vulnerability to find that voice and point of view and share it are radical acts of critical thought and expression. Don't let Chat GPT deprive you of these things.

I personally believe that even using Chat GPT as a creative aid stunts the poetics of this process. In its suggestions, we lose our own voices. I urge all of you to struggle with the blank page, the unknown, and dig into the silent space of your own interiority to seek out direction, answers, and opinions.

2. On the value of struggle in learning:

Learning is uncomfortable. We make mistakes. But trusting a process of uncovering, learning to see the corner of a treasure in the mess, is so much richer and more exciting than always looking to an other for an answer.

As a teacher speaking to my students, I want to impress upon you that the nature of learning is both learning a subject matter, but also learning how to learn. In our course work, we should not ignore the value of struggle, uncertainty, and writing/making as imperative to the learning process.

ChatGPT and generative AI tools are based on matching patterns on past materials, and they're not actively thinking/reasoning like a human does. (A metaphor: if you asked me to design a bridge without any engineering training, and I drew up some blueprints based on a

bunch of designs of bridges through Google, it might look pretty cool and it might even stand up! But we probably wouldn't build that exact bridge because I didn't follow any of the reasoning and requirements that's been developed in structural and civil engineering).

3. On disclosing the acceptable uses of Chat GPT

That being said, I know that tools like ChatGPT and generative AI can be useful for certain types of tasks, or as resources to help in writing. Therefore, for any assignment for which you use ChatGPT or any other generative AI, you must both (1) cite the tools you use, as you would cite a research paper or other resource that you used in your work, and (2) add a section titled "Generative AI Usage" documenting how you used the tool(s). Include transcripts of LLM text or dialogues, and any iterations of generative image, sound, or other media from/with AI, etc, to thoroughly document your process of using generative AI in producing the output of your project.

In general, you will not be penalized for using ChatGPT and other generative AI tools if you disclose how you used it. Of course, low quality assignments will still receive lower grades. However, writing a false statement about your use of ChatGPT or other generative AI tools, or turning in a document that was completely written by ChatGPT or an AI tool are likely violations of the academic honor code (plagiarism, false claims of performance, deliberate falsification), and will result in a 0 grade and a possible referral to the Office of Student Integrity.

Use of ChatGPT and AI tools is a large gray zone – the following are not 100% rules, but some suggestions and guidelines to help you use these tools in a way that will be helpful to you achieving the course goals and objectives.

Likely useful ways of using ChatGPT:

- Helping to re-word or re-structure a sentence or paragraph to help you more clearly convey an idea
- Translating languages (you may need to double check manually for errors)
- Finding a specific resource/paper you already know about but can't remember the name of
- Providing a template for a paragraph
- Asking it to critique your writing
- Cut down words you've written to meet a word count or page limit.

- Brainstorming (while keeping in mind the normative bent of generative AI tools, which are based on training data whose statistical majorities may not match what you want for your work)

Likely non-useful ways of using ChatGPT:

- Writing the assignment for you and turning it in – this is likely a violation of the academic honor code and will be dealt with as such
- Citing factual statements from ChatGPT – ChatGPT can “hallucinate,” or create very convincing sounding facts and citations, and passing them off as real
- Finding new sources and papers – the hallucination problem again
- Using ChatGPT as a general search engine – the hallucination problem again

Frequently Asked Questions

Where do I find the details of what to do for assignments?

Refer to OneDrive --> Documents --> General --> Assignment descriptions

When are assignments due?

Refer to the Schedule.

Where do I turn in assignments?

On Figma and Canvas. **BUT! ALL assignments must be turned in on Canvas in order to receive a grade.** Even if you present the work in class, your grade will be set at 0 until you turn in the work on Canvas.

Design Inspiration Resources

Resources for UI and Design Inspiration:

<https://dribbble.com/>

<https://www.awwwards.com/>

<https://www.siteinspire.com/>

<https://mobbin.design/browse/ios/apps>

<https://www.itsnicethat.com/>

<https://screenlane.com/?ref=uimovement>

<https://collectui.com/designs>

For Color Schemes

<https://colors.co/>

For Fonts

<https://fontsinuse.com/>

For Learning / Practicing Design

<https://www.dailyui.co/>