

# SI 307

## INTRODUCTION TO USER EXPERIENCE DESIGN

Fall 2023

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### Instructors

**Eric Gilbert** ([eegg@umich.edu](mailto:eegg@umich.edu)), John Derby Evans Associate Professor, School of Information

*Preferred address:* Eric

*Pronouns:* He/Him

*Office:* 3368 NQ

*Office Hours:* W 12-1 or via Zoom (with prior notice)

**James Rampton** ([rampton@umich.edu](mailto:rampton@umich.edu)), Lecturer III, School of Information

*Preferred address:* Jim

*Pronouns:* He/Him

*Office:* Lecturer Huddle Room

*Office Hours:* M 1-2:30pm or by appointment

## Teaching Team

**Shefali Patel** ([shefalip@umich.edu](mailto:shefalip@umich.edu)), MSI student, School of Information

*Preferred address:* Shefali

*Pronouns:* She/Her

*Discussion Sections:*

- Section 5 #35256 (2310 SEB, Weds 9AM - 10AM)
- Section 3 #35254 (2255 NQ, Weds 4PM - 5PM)

*Office Hours:*

- Tues (12PM -1PM) - <https://umich.zoom.us/j/98447482120>
- Thurs (5PM - 6PM) - <https://umich.zoom.us/j/98631201807>
- Prior appointment

**Rongqi “Roxanne” Bei** ([rbei@umich.edu](mailto:rbei@umich.edu)), MSI student, School of Information

*Preferred address:* Roxanne

*Pronouns:* She/Her

*Discussion Sections:*

- Section 7 #35258 (3230 USB, Tues 6PM - 7PM)
- Section 6 #35257 (2752 SSWB, Weds 4PM - 5PM)

*Office Hours:*

- Mon (4:30PM - 5:30PM), Fri (3PM - 4PM) - <https://umich.zoom.us/j/2770214023>
- Prior appointment

**Emily Cao** ([emilycao@umich.edu](mailto:emilycao@umich.edu)), MSI student, School of Information

*Preferred address:* Emily

*Pronouns:* She/Her

*Discussion Sections:*

- Section 4 #35255 (1110 NQ, Tues 6PM - 7PM)
- Section 2 #35253 (B137 MLB, Weds 9AM - 10AM)

*Office Hours:*

- **Only for Monday, Nov 20 (11 AM - 1 PM), Tuesday, Nov 21 (12:30pm - 2:30pm) - <https://umich.zoom.us/j/91074114126>**

- Mon (11AM - 12PM), Tues (1PM - 2PM) - <https://umich.zoom.us/j/91074114126>
- Prior appointment

## Course Overview

This course is a broad introduction to the basics of User Experience (UX) Design. This will include important theories behind UX practice, common tools for design, assessment and presentation, as well as practices common in UX work. Students will implement the principles of UX in the context of problem-solving.

The class is comprised of four major, high-level approaches:

- Theory
- Talks (e.g., UX professionals)
- Tools (e.g., Figma)
- Tactics

The overall goal for this class is for students to adopt a UX perspective to solving problems. How can design help here? What more would I need to know? How do I measure success? How do I convince others?

In this class, students will interact with an organization that provides a problem that translates into a design deliverable. The partner organization will provide the context of the problem and design specifications to guide the work of the students throughout the semester.

Structured as individual assignments, the course will ask students to create design deliverables so that they can walk away with work for a portfolio. The class will also aim to do cohort-building among the UX-pathway BSIs.

## Learning Objectives

- Literacy in core UX principles
- Literacy with common UX tools, such as Figma.
- Awareness of UX methods, such as but not limited to iterative design and usability testing.
- Awareness of the UX field, how both companies and organizations use UX professionals, and what different roles professionals can play within those organizations—such as researcher, designer, and program manager.

## Communication Policy

In order to reduce any uncertainty and anxiety regarding the response time on our communications, here is our policy:

- In case you are struggling with the class, or with life more broadly, the earlier we know the better. It doesn't serve anyone to hide that you are suffering. If the teaching team can help you through it, we will. If we can't, we'll help find who can.
- Your first communication should be to *reach out to your discussion section GSI*.
- You should always include **[SI 307]** in your email's subject heading otherwise it can easily get lost in the morass.
- We will generally aim to have responses to students within 24 hours. These timelines cannot be guaranteed, but we will work towards ensuring that you receive responses in a timely manner.
- Please note that a response is not necessarily a resolution. For simple queries, it is possible that the response could contain a resolution. However, in some cases, the request might require more time to handle and might involve multiple parties to resolve. In such cases, the resolution will depend on the request's complexity.

## Assignments & Grading

There will be 8 major assignments, in addition to attendance, reading reflections, and in-class activities. All major design assignments *are individual projects*, and will be described in detail via a design brief. Each has an accompanying rubric.

Assignment	Percentage
Attendance & Participation	10%
Reading Reflections/Assessment	20%
Problem Statement	5%
Benchmarking UX Portfolios	5%
Describe Design Oriented Approaches	5%

Design 5 Frames in Figma	15%
Clickable Prototype & Usability Test	5%
First Draft of Designs & Deck for Feedback	10%
Revised Designs & Updated Deck + History	20%
Designs on Portfolio Site	5%

The course follows a standard grading scale:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A+	97%
A	93%
A-	90%
B+	87%
B	83%
B-	80%
C+	77%
C	73%
C-	70%
D+	67%
D	63%
D-	60%
E/NR	0%

## **Regrade Policy**

*Mulligans.* Every student can do new work on *one assignment*, and resubmit it for re-evaluation, as long as the resubmission of that assignment occurs within *one week* of the grade release date. You get one mulligan for the whole course (i.e., not per assignment). This effectively grants you a “re-do” or “mulligan” that you can deploy at your choosing, and we will grade your new work on the assignment. However, this does not apply to the last assignment (not enough time to re-grade). **You will only have 48 or 72 hours to work on Revised Designs & Updated Deck + History. Take this into consideration.** Please send email to your GSI if you are using your mulligan and mention what assignment in your email.

*Non-mulligan regrades.* Outside the mulligan policy, if students would like any assignment in this course re-graded (in the form the submission was in at the time of submission; i.e., no new work), that request must take place within *one week* of the student receiving the grade, and be made in writing via email to the GSI. The instructional team is happy to accommodate this request; however, students should be aware that requests for re-grading open the entire assignment up for re-grading, not just the portion requested by the student. Therefore, a request for a re-grade could result in a total grade going up, stay the same, or going down. The result of the re-grade is final: no additional requests for further consideration of the same assignment will be granted.

## **Late Assignments & Absences**

Things come up. We understand that not everyone will be able to make it to class every week and there may be reasons why an assignment needs to be turned in a bit late. Here are the course policies regarding absence and lateness:

- Late assignments will be assessed a 10% penalty (i.e., one letter grade) for each day that they are late. Assignments that are more than four days late will not be accepted.
- We will drop the lowest 4 reading responses and in-class assessments, no questions asked, for everyone.
- If an extension is required for “legitimate reasons,” you must make your request to the teaching team by email at least **12 hours before** the deadline. If “legitimate reasons” applies to either the reading responses or the in-class assessments, you must use your no-questions-asked drops first; no hoarding those for a later date.
- "Legitimate reasons" for absence and lateness include illness, family emergencies, exceptional job duties, and significant emotional distress. The legitimacy of other specific instances that may not necessarily fall within the above is at the discretion of the teaching team. Please note that "legitimate reasons" do not include excessive

course-related or extracurricular work. You are required to plan ahead to meet your deadlines in all classes.

- Most important: communicate with your GSI. Early and often if you are struggling with turning in any work.
- Absences: We will drop 5 attendance grades. This can be from lecture or discussion.

## Software

### *Figma*

This is free for U of M students. This will be used to complete many assignments.

### *Noun Project*

Students will be asked to use <https://thenounproject.com/pricing/#icons> to find icons to use in wireframes or something comparable. This is also a subscription service. We recommend the *Noun Project Unlimited Individual Subscription* plan.

## Texts

All readings will be available on the Canvas site for this class (linked from the corresponding assignment). If you cannot access a reading for some reason, please let the instructors know ASAP so they can address the problem for the entire class.

**Please note: everyone in the class is expected to come to class having read the required readings for that class.** This is the intent behind the daily assignments for the readings. If you do not do the required readings, your understanding of the course material will suffer, as will your grade and the classroom discussions. Please plan on spending ten hours of work outside class meeting times on course assignments and readings.

## Class Activities

Each week there will be assigned readings. There may also be optional readings which are (obviously), not required, but might be useful to students particularly interested in a certain topic. All of these will be available electronically through Canvas. Our engagement with these readings will begin online, before the class session for which they're assigned, and will continue in class.

We will also have a variety of guest speakers during the course of the semester. Be prepared with good questions, engage with them actively, and appreciate their time. Guest speakers are always energized by an engaged audience.

### **Discussion Guidelines (both online and in class)**

A positive learning environment relies upon creating an atmosphere where diverse perspectives can be expressed. Design can bear on a number of pressing and controversial social and political issues. Each student is encouraged to take an active part in class discussions and activities. Honest and respectful dialogue is expected. Disagreement and challenging of ideas in a supportive and sensitive manner is encouraged. Hostility and disrespectful behavior are not acceptable. Just as we expect others to listen attentively to our own views, we must reciprocate and listen to others when they speak, especially when we disagree with them. However, in this class, our emphasis will be on engaging in the mutual exploration of issues as presented in the course readings as scholars, rather than in defending the points of view we have formed outside the classroom.

### **Content Warnings**

The content and discussion in this course will at times engage with potentially triggering content. Some of this will be emotionally and intellectually challenging to engage with. We will do our best to make this classroom a space where we can engage empathetically and thoughtfully with potentially difficult content.

We've done our best to identify any texts with potentially triggering content. We've included tags for discussions of: racism, ableism, and sexism. If you have concerns about encountering anything specific in the course material that we have not already tagged and would like me to provide warnings, please come see us or send us an email. Please feel free to discuss any concerns—including potential concerns about attending in-class discussions—with the instructor.

### **Point of View**

The readings and my comments in class will suggest a particular point of view. This perspective is our own (or the author's) and does not have to be yours! We encourage you to disagree with the ideas in the readings and lectures as well as the perspectives of your colleagues in the course. A significant part of a college education is learning about the complexity of various

issues. Therefore, it is important that we listen and respect one another, but we do not have to agree.

## **Religious/Cultural Observance**

Persons who have religious or cultural observances that coincide with this class should let their GSI know by e-mail by 9/15. We strongly encourage you to honor your cultural and religious holidays! However, if we do not hear from you by 9/15, I will assume that you plan to attend all class meetings.

## **Academic Integrity**

Unless otherwise specified in an assignment all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts, statements, or phrases from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. Any violation of the School's policy on Academic and Professional Integrity (stated in the BSI Student Handbooks) will result in serious penalties, which might range from failing an assignment, to failing a course, to being expelled from the program. Violations of academic and professional integrity will be reported to UMSI Student Affairs. Consequences impacting assignment or course grades are determined by the faculty instructor; additional sanctions may be imposed by the assistant dean for academic and student affairs.

## **Use of Generative AI**

Emerging generative AI tools can be useful in learning, and in UX practice. We do not disallow the use of generative AI in assignments, though students should exercise caution. Generative AI tools can hallucinate, or create unexpected artifacts, in ways that are difficult to anticipate. Students are responsible for any content they appropriate from these tools. Moreover, the instructors would encourage students to consider what it may mean to be entering a profession with portfolio work indistinguishable from the median output of an AI tool.

## **Class Recordings**

We will be doing audio and video recording of all sessions to enable those who cannot attend class in person on a given day to access the content. These recordings will not be made available publicly. Recordings of all sessions will be available on Canvas only to students registered for this class. As part of your participation in this course, you may be recorded. If

you do not wish to be recorded, please contact the professor during the first week of class to discuss alternative arrangements. The camera only picks up the front of the room (instructor and slides), but this may require you to sit in a particular place in the room, outside the cameras' view. Students may not copy and share the lecture videos with those not in the class, or upload them to any other online environment (this is a violation of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)). Personal recordings are prohibited except with permission. Students are prohibited from recording/distributing any class activity without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

## **Disability Statement**

The University of Michigan recognizes disability as an integral part of diversity and is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable educational environment for students with disabilities. Students who are experiencing a disability-related barrier should contact Services for Students with Disabilities <https://ssd.umich.edu/>; 734-763-3000 or [ssdoffice@umich.edu](mailto:ssdoffice@umich.edu). For students who are connected with SSD, accommodation requests can be made in Accommodate. If you have any questions or concerns please contact your SSD Coordinator or visit SSD's Current Student webpage. SSD considers aspects of the course design, course learning objects and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student. Further conversation with SSD, instructors, and the student may be warranted to ensure an accessible course experience. The instructional team will treat any information that you provide in as confidential a manner as possible.

## **Student Mental Health and Wellbeing**

University Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressures and challenges associated with relationships, mental health, alcohol or other drugs, identities, finances, etc. If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help is a courageous thing to do for yourself and those who care about you. If the source of your stressors is academic, please contact me so that we can find solutions together. Ashley Evaritt, a Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) counselor, is embedded in UMSI, schedule an appointment with her by copying and pasting the following url into your browser: <https://bit.ly/Evaritt-CAPS-UMSI>

For personal concerns, U-M offers a variety of resources, many which are listed on the [Resources for Student Well-being](#) webpage. You can also search for additional well-being resources on that website.

## Schedule

Class	Tuesday 3-4pm	Thursday 3-4PM	Readings & Assignments
<b>Week 1</b>	8/29	8/31	Due 9/5 at 3pm
	<p>Introduction to Instructors &amp; Class</p> <p><i>Presenter: Eric, Jim, Shefali, Emily, Roxanne</i></p>	<p>Intro to Semester Theme: Water</p> <p><i>Presenter: Rochelle Sturtevant, NOAA</i></p>	<p><b>Assignments</b> Reading Reflection</p> <p><b>Readings</b> Design Methods: <a href="#">Chapter 1</a> &amp; <a href="#">Chapter 2</a></p> <p>A Project Guide to UX Design: For User Experience Designers in the Field or in the Making - <a href="#">Chapter 1</a>, “The Tao of UXD: Curiosity Meets Passion Meets Empathy”</p> <p><i>Optional:</i></p> <p><a href="#">Value Sensitive Design: Theory &amp; Methods</a> By Friedman, Khan</p> <p><i>Content warning: racism, sexism, ableism</i></p>
	9/5	9/7	Due 9/12 at 3pm
	Design Thinking Part 1	Thematic Problem Part 1	<b>Assignments</b> Assignment 1 - Problem

<p><b>Week 2</b></p>	<p><i>Presenter: Eric</i></p>	<p><i>Presenter: Rochelle Sturtevant, NOAA</i></p>	<p>Statement</p> <p>Reading Reflection</p> <p><b>Readings</b>  Design Methods: <a href="#">Chapter 3</a> &amp; <a href="#">Chapter 4</a></p> <p>A Project Guide to UX Design: For user experience designers in the field or in the making: <a href="#">Chapter 4, “Project Objectives &amp; Approach.”</a></p> <p><i>Optional:</i></p> <p><a href="#">“The Problem with Personas”</a> By Peterson</p> <p><i>Content warning: ableism</i></p>
<p><b>Week 3</b></p>	<p>9/12</p> <p>Portfolios</p> <p><i>Presenter: Shefali</i></p>	<p>9/14</p> <p>Design Thinking Part 2</p> <p><i>Presenter: Jim</i></p>	<p>Due 9/19 at 3pm</p> <p><b>Assignments</b>  Assignment 2 - Benchmark Portfolios</p> <p>Reading Reflection</p> <p><b>Readings</b>  Design Justice: <a href="#">Introduction</a></p> <p><a href="#">“How to begin designing for diversity”</a> by Jahan and Boyuan</p>

			<p><i>Optional:</i></p> <p><a href="#">“Design Thinking is a rebrand for White Supremacy”</a> by Buzon</p>
<b>Week 4</b>	9/19	9/21	Due 9/26 at 3pm
	<p>Introduction to Figma &amp; Design Decks</p> <p><i>Presenter: Jim</i></p>	<p>Design Justice Part 1</p> <p><i>Presenter: Eric</i></p>	<p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p>Assignment 3 - Describe Design Oriented Approaches</p> <p>Reading Reflection</p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>Design Justice: <a href="#">Chapter 1</a> &amp; <a href="#">Chapter 2</a></p> <p><a href="#">Inclusive Design for a Digital World</a> by Gilbert - Chapter 3, “If It’s Annoying, It’s Probably Not Accessible”</p> <p><i>Content warning: ableism, sexism, sexual harassment</i></p>
<b>Week 5</b>	9/26	9/28	Due 10/3 at 3pm
	<p>UX Practitioner Talk / Guest Lecture</p> <p><i>Presenter: Saeideh Bakhshi, Former head of Blue Sky group at</i></p>	<p>Design Justice Part 2</p> <p><i>Presenter: Eric</i></p>	<p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p>Reading Reflection</p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <p><a href="#">100 Things Every Designer Needs to Know</a></p>

	<i>Google, UX Researcher at Facebook, UX at Flickr</i>		<a href="#">About People</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “How People Think”</li> </ul> <p>Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4 of Laws of UX by Jon Yablonski, OReilly Media  <a href="https://search.lib.umich.edu/catalog/record/99187348808206381?query=Laws+of+UX&amp;library=All+libraries">https://search.lib.umich.edu/catalog/record/99187348808206381?query=Laws+of+UX&amp;library=All+libraries</a></p>
<b>Week 6</b>	10/3	10/5	Due 10/12 at 3pm
	Social and Psychological Principles Part 1  <i>Presenter: Jim</i>	Social and Psychological Principles Part 2  <i>Presenter: Jim</i>	<b>Assignments</b> Assignment 4 - Design 5 Frames in Figma  <b>Readings</b>  <a href="#">100 Things Every Designer Needs to Know About People</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “What Motivates People”</li> <li>- “People are Social Animals”</li> </ul>
<b>Week 7</b>	10/10	10/12	
	Social and Psychological Principles Part 3  <i>Presenter: Eric</i>	UX Practitioner Talk / Guest Lecture  <i>Presenter: Ayman Shamma, Staff Research Scientist, Carbon Neutrality team, Toyota;</i>	<b>Assignments</b> No Assignments  <b>Readings</b> No Readings

		<i>former head of research at Flickr</i>	
<b>Week 8</b>	10/17	10/19	Due 10/24 at 3pm
	NO CLASS	UX Practitioner Talk / Guest Lecture  <i>Presenter: Rochelle Sturtevant, NOAA</i>	<b>Assignments</b> Reading Reflection  <b>Readings</b> <i>Design Methods:</i> <a href="#">Chapter 6</a> & <a href="#">Chapter 7</a>  <i>Optional:</i>  Lehey, R. L. (2014). <a href="#">Letting go of sunk costs.</a> <i>Psychology Today.</i>
<b>Week 9</b>	10/24	10/26	Due 10/31 at 3pm
	Prototyping & Iterative Design Part 1  <i>Presenter: Eric</i>	Prototyping in Figma Demo  <i>Presenter: Jim</i>	<b>Assignments</b> Reading Reflection  <b>Readings</b> <i>Design Methods:</i> <a href="#">Chapter 8</a>  Kowitz, B. (2014). <a href="#">The key to happy productive designers: Teaching your team to critique.</a> VentureBeat.  <i>Optional:</i>  Kulkarni, C. et. al. (2015). <a href="#">Peer and self assessment in massive online classes.</a>

			Design Thinking Research.
<b>Week 10</b>	10/31	11/2	Due 11/7 at 3pm
	Prototyping & Iterative Design Part 2  <i>Presenter: Jim</i>	UX Practitioner Talk / Guest Lecture  <i>Presenter: Shadouches Reed, Senior User Experience Researcher, Etsy; formerly UX at Ford</i>	<b>Assignments</b> Assignment 5 - Clickable Prototype & Usability Test  Reading Reflection  <b>Readings</b> Design Methods: <a href="#">Chapter 9</a>  Riche, Y. (2016). <a href="#">A/B Testing vs User Experience Research.</a> LinkedIn.  <i>Optional:</i>  Hutchinson, H., et. al. (2003). <a href="#">Technology probes: inspiring design for and with families.</a> ACM SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing (CHI).
<b>Week 11</b>	11/7	11/9	Due 11/14 at 3pm
	Evaluating Designs Part 1  <i>Presenter: Eric</i>	Qualtrics & Prolific Demo  <i>Presenter: Roxanne</i>	<b>Assignments</b> Reading Reflection  <b>Readings</b> Design Methods: <a href="#">Chapter 10</a>

			<p>Nielson, J. &amp; Molich R. (1990). <a href="#">Heuristic evaluation of user interfaces</a>. ACM SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing (CHI).</p> <p><i>Optional:</i></p> <p>Burnett, M.M., Peters, A., Hill, C., and Elarief, N. (2016). <a href="#">Finding gender-inclusiveness software issues with GenderMag: A field investigation</a>. ACM SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing (CHI).</p>
<b>Week 12</b>	11/14	11/16	Due 11/21 at 3pm
	<p>Evaluating Designs Part 2</p> <p><i>Presenter: Eric</i></p>	<p>Using Heuristics to Design the Perfect Site</p> <p><i>Presenter: Jim</i></p>	<p><b>Assignments</b> Assignment 6 - Submit Designs for Feedback</p> <p><b>Readings</b> No Readings</p>
<b>Week 13</b>	11/21	11/23	Due 11/28 at 3pm
	<p>UX Practitioner Talk / Guest Speaker</p> <p><i>Presenter: Sierre</i></p>	NO CLASS	<p><b>Assignments</b> Reading Reflection</p> <p><b>Readings</b></p>

	<i>Wolfkostin, Senior product designer, Duo</i>		<p>Cattapan (2021). <a href="#">Design communication is a critical skill</a>. Shopify UX blog.</p> <p>Antin (2023). <a href="#">The UX Research Reckoning is Here</a>. One Big Thing.</p>
<b>Week 14</b>	11/28	11/30	Due 12/5 at 3pm
	<p>Communicating</p> <p><i>Presenter: Emily</i></p>	<p>Summary of Initial Feedback for Designs &amp; Common Mistakes</p> <p>CDO: Joanna Kroll</p> <p><i>Presenter: Eric &amp; Jim</i></p>	<p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p>Assignment 7 - Revised Designs and Updated deck with Revision History</p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>No Readings</p>
<b>Week 15</b>	12/5	12/7	Due 12/12 at 3pm
	<p>Closing Session and Presenting to Client</p> <p><i>Presenter: Eric &amp; Jim, Rochelle Sturtevant</i></p>	NO CLASS	<p><b>Assignments</b></p> <p>Assignment 8 - Show Designs in Portfolio Site</p> <p><b>Readings</b></p> <p>No Readings</p>
<b>Week 16</b>	12/12 - FINALS	12/14 - FINALS	N/A