USABILITY AND UX DESIGN

*JOMC 581 – UNC-Chapel Hill*

Welcome to Fall 2015 semester

Whether creating an the newest app, an interactive kiosk or an entire Web presence, excellent, usable and understandable design is central to a communicator's success. Usability and UX Design combines the basics of visual layout with several strategies for building and testing interfaces.

This course is about being a knowledgeable journalist, a media artist, an informed designer and an innovator. Passion for ethical communication and creativity are essential to your success. Understanding users and their behaviors will lead you to becoming an effective creator of digital products. This work opens many possibilities, some of which we are yet to discover. The goals of this class, therefore, are to familiarize you with usability and UX design concepts and allow you the opportunities to experiment, create and explore.

The essentials

- **Class time and location:** Tuesdays and Thursdays,9:30-11:20 a.m., 60 Carroll Hall
- **Instructor:** Associate Professor Laura Ruel, Carroll 78, 919-448-8864, lruel@unc.edu
- **Office hours:** Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-Noon, and by appointment

Required purchases
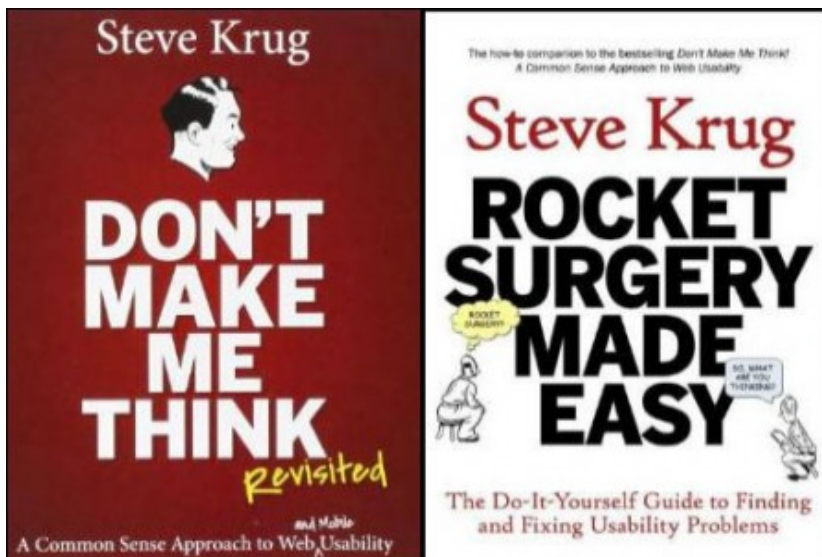
- **Textbooks:** Don't Make Me Think Revisited: A Common Sense Approach to Web and Mobile Usability (copyright 2014) by Steve Krug and Rocket Surgery Made Easy (copyright 2009) by Steve Krug.
- **Recommended items**

- USB memory stick (1G minimum) or portable hard drive to save your work. Please be aware that you are responsible for backing up your own work.
- Personal headphones. You will need to supply your own headphones in the lab for Web site viewing.
- Sketchbook for tracking ideas, storyboarding class projects and brainstorming
- **Other materials**
  - You also will want access to Lynda.com training library for the semester, which you can access free as a UNC student. by going to http://software.sites.unc.edu/lynda/.
  - Much of the reading material for this class is through online links and videos. See the Readings/Viewings link of this syllabus site.

Description/Policies

Course description

This course will introduce you to the basic areas of excellent multimedia and UX design and help you develop expertise in their application. They are:

- Usability
- Innovation
- Audience analysis
- Information editing
- Information architecture
- Aesthetic presentation

By reading, viewing and discussing the writings and works of UX professionals, journalists, artists, Web developers, photographers, usability experts, graphic designers, educators and researchers you will deepen your appreciation for each distinct media form. By examining the latest eyetracking research and conducting a usability test, you will assess the practical application of many concepts. Through original storyboards and exercises, you will work to expertly integrate all this knowledge into well-designed packages.

Important policies

Simply put, attendance is required, participation is expected and deadlines are absolute. All assignments are due at the beginning of class on the specified dates.
NO LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

It is expected that each student in this course will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the UNC honor code. All academic work should be done with the high level of honesty and integrity this university demands.

Organization of class time

Each class will consist of lecture/discussion. Some days will include lab time. In most cases students will use lab time to practice Adobe Illustrator techniques or begin an assignment that is related to the class material. Students should plan to spend additional time outside of class to complete these assignments.

Seeking Help

If you need individual assistance, it's your responsibility to meet with the instructor. If you are serious about wanting to improve your performance in the course, the time to seek help is as soon as you are aware of the problem – whether the problem is difficulty with course material, a disability, or an illness.

Diversity

The University's policy on Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination is outlined in the 2011-2012 Undergraduate Bulletinhttp://www.unc.edu/ugradbulletin/. UNC is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and does not discriminate in offering access to its educational programs and activities on the basis of age, gender, race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

Special Accommodations

If you require special accommodations to attend or participate in this course, please let the instructor know as soon as possible. If you need information about disabilities visit the Department of Disability Services website at http://disabilityservices.unc.edu/

AEJMC core competencies

The Accrediting Council on Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC) requires that, irrespective of their particular specialization, all graduates should be aware of certain core values and competencies and be able to:

- Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press for the country in which the institution that invites ACEJMC is located, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communications;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society;
- Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information;
- Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity;
- Think critically, creatively and independently;
- Conduct research and evaluate information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work;
- Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve;
- Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness;
- • Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts;
- Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

Units requesting evaluation of a graduate program must also demonstrate how their master's graduates attain this additional core competency:

- Contribute to knowledge appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.

Grading

Grading criteria

There are basic expectations that any supervisor or project manager would have for a project undertaken by a multimedia designer or usability specialist. All of your assignments must meet the following minimum basic standards:

- completed according to the assignment specifications.
- completed on time.
- free of typographical, grammatical and mechanical errors.
- completed so as to evidence a clear grasp of multimedia production and usability standards and design concepts.

Your storyboard and final project assignments also will be evaluated for:

- news value
- presentation editing decisions
- architecture of information presentation
- aesthetic design choices
- creativity and innovation
- usability
- audience analysis and personas *(storyboard and final project)*
- written justification of design decisions *(final project)*
- written timetable for project completion *(final project)*

Your usability test (partner/group assignment) also will be evaluated for:

- quality of the user test script and testing materials.
- interpretation of test results.
- clarity and focus of written usability report.
- effectiveness of usability test results presentation.

Your overall grade for this course will be based on the following components:

- Design exercises (in and outside of class) (10%)
- Structure a site assignment (15 %)
- Photo editing, typography, audio and design assignment (information editing and design) (15 %)
- Storyboard assignment (simple storyboard) (20 %)
- Usability test, presentation and report (20%)
- Final project (pitch plus storyboards and writeup) (20 %)

Grading scale
Total points to earn = 1,000

Final points	Undergrad grade	Graduate grade
965-1000	A	H
915-994	A	P
895-914	A-	p
875-894	B+	P

815-874	B	P
795-814	B-	P
775-794	C+	P
715-774	C	P
695-714	C-	L
675-694	D+	L
615-674	D	L
595-614	D-	L
Below 595	F	F

Design exercises

In this class you will be working with Adobe Illustrator to ultimately create sophisticated professional designs. The Illustrator exercises are intended to help you practice design techniques so your skills constantly improve. In order to complete these assignments correctly, you will need to keep up with the reading and lectures during class and also with your assignments to view lynda.com lessons to learn Illustrator techniques. More particulars about each assignment will be given in class.

Structure a site

Your first assignment will require you to re-organize a complex site into a list of assets and a flowchart. You also will create user profiles and personas. More details will be provided in class at the time of the assignment.

Information editing assignment

or your second assignment you will be given a group of assets and that you will organize into a presentation. The goal of this assignment is to help you refine your editing and design skills. You will use the program Soundslides to create this presentation. More details will be provided in class at the time of the assignment.

Storyboard

Your third assignment will require you to complete a simple storyboard that includes an audience analysis, personas, flowchart, wireframes and designed/annotated panels. More details will be provided in class at the time of the assignment.

Usability exercise, presentation and report

Your ability to understand the value of usability testing and execute a valuable study is essential to your success in this course. During the semester you learn to conduct usability research and will be evaluated on your ability administer a study and report on it.

Your assignment from this segment of the course will be to work with your partner/group to develop, conduct, analyze, report on and present a user test.

More specifics about the requirements will be provided at the time of assignment.

Final project

Your final project will require you to act as the executive producer and lead designer for a given multimedia presentation or one you propose. In this assignment you will determine a target audience for the presentation and

make design and delivery decisions based on your audience analysis. This assignment will require you to complete a big-picture flowchart, audience analysis, personas, wireframes and annotated panel designs.

More specifics about the requirements will be provided at the time of assignment.

CALENDAR

Course calendar

Here is a link is a month-by-month calendar with important dates and deadlines. Please note that this calendar is a guide and not a comprehensive list. Additional assignments and readings may be distributed and added to this calendar throughout the semester.

If assignment dates/deadlines change, the changes will be announced in class and updated on this calendar.

Link to Calendar:
https://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=38huge593gil3peg61nd4h0t88%40group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/New_York

Readings/Viewings

weekly readings and viewings

Below are the class readings for each week. Please check this page regularly for your reading assignments, as items will be added as the semester progresses.

For information about deadlines for assignments and other information, please see the **calendar** and the **assignments** page.

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week 1
BEGINNING AUGUST 16
design thinking | the language of UX

Visit Design Meltdown. Choose one site you feel is well-designed (either for phone, tablet or desktop), convert it to a PDF and put in in the dropbox on the server before Thursday's class. Come prepared to articulate why you liked it.

Complete **student survey**

Sign up for lab access: **http://jomclabaccess.web.unc.edu**

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week 2
BEGINNING AUGUST 23
what's good UX? | building personas

Read: The lean UX manifesto: principle-driven design

Read: A Closer Look at Personas: What they are and How They Work

Watch lynda.com lesson: User Experience Fundamentals for Web Design with Chris Nodder

Beyond wireframing: The real-life UX design process

Watch video: From Dinner to Dining: The Evolving Role of the Designer

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week 3
BEGINNING AUGUST 30
flowcharts | more on personas

Begin Lynda.com tutorials Illustrator CC for Web Design Core Concepts with Justin Seeley, Chapters 1-12 (finish by week 5)

Creating Arrows and Arrowheads in Illustrator CS6

Stop Designing Pages And Start Designing Flows by Morgan Brown

The definitive guide to web flowcharts by Felix Ding

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week 4
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 6
design thinking | good ux design | wire framing
distribute information editing assignment

Book: Don't Make Me Think – Revisited: Chapters 1-7 by Steve Krug

Continue with Lynda.com tutorials **Illustrator for CC for Web Design with Justin Seeley,** Chapters 1-12 (finish by week 5)

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week 5
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 13
GUEST SPEAKER: \Melissa Eggleston, UX professional
review structure assignment | media forms

Book: Don't Make Me Think – Revisited: Chapters 8-13 by Steve Krug

Finish Lynda.com tutorials: Illustrator CC for Web Design Core Concepts with Justin Seeley

A Journey Through Beautiful Typography In Web Design From Shavaughn

8 Simple Ways to Improve Typography In Your Designs By Antonio Carusone

Tips for Making Good Audio Slideshows By Reuben Stern

Experiment with Soundslides OR Adobe Premiere for assignment two. You can download free trials at http://soundslides.com/ or http://www.adobe.com/downloads.html.

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week 6
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 20
typography, photo editing, design and audio editing for the web, cont.

Picking the right media for the story by Paul Grabowicz

Review Lynda.com tutorials Illustrator for Web Design with Justin Seeley

Continue to experiment with Soundslides OR Adobe Premiere for assignment two. You can download free trials at http://soundslides.com/ or http://www.adobe.com/downloads.html.

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week 7
BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 27
review information editing assignment | developing a storyboard

Watch Lynda.com lesson: User Experience Fundamentals for Web Design with Chris Nodder

Intro to Wireframing, HCD & Design Thinking (slides) by Priya Dandawate

OR

Wireframing 101 (video) by Priya Dandawate

Read: Device Agnostic

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week 8
BEGINNING OCTOBER 4
storyboarding

Watch Lynda.com lesson: Creating Illustrator documents optimized for your project with Justin Putney.

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week 9
BEGINNING OCTOBER 11
storyboarding | introduction to user testing

October 15-16: Fall Break

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week 10
beginning october 18
user test scripts | research and usability

Read book Rocket Surgery Made Easy by Steve Krug: Chapters 1-16

OJR's 5-guide to to-it-yourself usability testing

UX Without User Research is Not UX

Using the 5 Es to Understand Users

Review these resources:

- User test script (Krug example, .doc file)
- Informed consent form (OJR example, .doc file)
- Pre-experiment questions (OJR example, .doc file)
- Free observation checklist (student example, .doc file)
- Usability tasks (usability.gov example, html link; student example, .doc file)
- Post-experiment questionnaire (OJR example, .doc file)
- Interview questions (OJR example, .doc file)

** APPY RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM WEDNESDAYS PRESENTATIONS AND FRIST WO ARTICLES LISTED FOR NEXT WEEK TO THE SITES WE WILL TEST (list to come by this week).

** Come to class on TUESDAY prepared to discuss how the research findings can be applied to these sites.

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week 11
beginning october 25
review assignment three | distribute assignment four | research and usability, cont.

10 Useful Usability Findings and Guidelines

10 Useful Findings About How People View Websites

Read: Talking with Participants During a Usability Test

Sample usability report of TowerRecords.com website

Reporting the Results of a Usability Test

Report Template: Usability Test

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week 12
BEGINNING NOVEMBER 1
refining user test scripts | conducting user tests

Conduct user tests

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week 13
BEGINNING NOVEMBER 8
writing usability reports and composing presentations

Discuss test findings, write usability reports

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week 14
BEGINNING NOVEMBER 15
write and review usability reports

Final project discussion and selection

Discuss test findings, write usability reports

Read: **Speak More Effectively by Dale Carnegie**

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week 15
BEGINNING NOVEMBER 22
presenting reports

Usability test presentations

WEEK 16
BEGINNING NOVEMBER 29
FINAL PROJECT WORK

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final exam period
TUESDAY DECEMBER 8
8-11 A.M.

FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

CONTACT

Laura Ruel

Academic Director, Master of Arts in Communication and Technology
Hugh Morton Distinguished Associate Professor
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
UNC-Chapel Hill
78 Carroll Hall | Campus Box 3365
Chapel Hill, NC 27599
Office: (919) 923-0218
Cell: (919) 448-8864
lruel@unc.edu