

Introduction Fall 2021

When creating an app, website, game, or another digital product, you need excellent, usable and understandable design to be successful.

This course is all about being a data-informed designer, a knowledgeable communicator, an artist and an innovator. Understanding users and their behaviors will help you to become an effective creator of digital products.

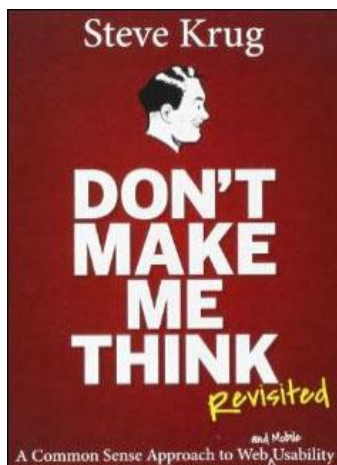
The main goals of this class are:

- to familiarize you with usability and design concepts
- to encourage you to grow, experiment, create, test and explore

The essentials

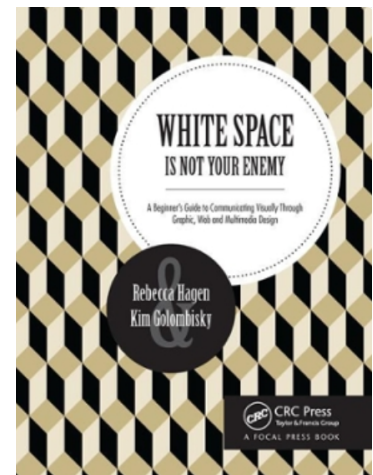
- **Instructor:** Professor Melissa Eggleston, mjmoser@email.unc.edu, 704-280-9080 (mobile)
- **Office hours:** By appointment as needed via Zoom or phone. Synchronous “AMA” sessions will also serve as times to ask me anything class-related face-to-face. [Zoom room access here](#).
- **Instructor availability:** If you have questions or need clarification on an assignment/reading, please post to the class forum area first. This is similar to asking questions in an in person class and everyone will benefit. If you need to talk about something more sensitive, email is the best way to reach me. I will respond to your email within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours on weekends.
- **Sakai:** The material for this class is provided through online links and videos. You will find these in the Course Materials area of Sakai. You will also find and upload assignments in Sakai. If you are ever in doubt of when something is due or what exactly is due, check Sakai.

Required supplies



Book: Don't Make Me Think Revisited: A Common Sense Approach to Web and Mobile Usability (copyright 2014) by Steve Krug. Paper copy recommended.

Book: White Space is Not Your Enemy: A Beginner's Guide to Communicating Visually Through Graphic, Web & Multimedia Design (copyright 2017) by Kim Golombisky and Rebecca Hagen. Paper copy recommended.



Design software: Access to Adobe Creative Cloud is available to all UNC students with an onyen. <http://software.sites.unc.edu/adobe/> Any kind of design software is fine for completing your assignments. Common programs to use are Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, Sketch, Figma, or Invision Studio.

Other suggested items (but not required):

Sketchbook: This is helpful for tracking ideas, storyboarding class projects and brainstorming design ideas. You often want to sketch ideas out before going to your computer, it will save you time.

LinkedInLearning (previously Lynda.com) training library: You can access as a UNC student by going to <https://software.sites.unc.edu/linkedin/>. If you don't have experience with Adobe Illustrator or a similar design program, you are **strongly** encouraged to review Lynda courses to gain these design skills you will need to complete assignments well.

Description

The School of Media and Journalism's accrediting body outlines a number of values you should be aware of and competencies you should be able to demonstrate by the time you graduate from our program. [Learn more about them here.](#)

No single course could possibly give you all of these values and competencies, but collectively, our classes are designed to build your abilities in each of these areas. In this class, we will address a number of the values and competencies, with special emphasis on the last six bullet dots under "Professional values and competencies" in the link above. This course will introduce you to the basics of 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 eye-tracking research and conducting a usability test, you will assess the practical application of concepts. Through original creations and exercises, you will work to integrate all this knowledge into well-designed packages.

Important policy about deadlines

Deadlines are firm. All assignments are due as stated in Sakai. Don't wait until the last 10 minutes and run into a Sakai problem. **If you are late, you will not receive credit for the assignment.** Do not email me to request anything different - the policy is the same for all students in this class to be fair to everyone who works hard to get items in on time. Exceptions may only be made for truly exceptional circumstances, e.g. an emergency health situation. If something of that nature is the case, contact me ASAP.

Semester Schedule & Topics

Check for assignment information and due dates in Sakai. Date changes (if any) will be made in Sakai.

Week	Dates	Topic	Assignments Due
1	8/18–8/22 (short week)	Introduction	Intro Meeting with Melissa Weekly UI website Choose website to work on
2	8/23–8/29	Unit 1: Design Thinking, Usability Testing, User Behavior	Research Plan Sync Session #1
3	8/30–9/5	Unit 1 continued	
4	9/6–9/12	Unit 1 continued	Usability Testing Results
5	9/13–9/19	Unit 2: Understanding Audiences	Weekly UI #1 Sync Session #2
6	9/20–9/26	Unit 2 continued	Weekly UI #2
7	9/27–10/3	Unit 2 continued	Weekly UI #3
8	10/4–10/10	Unit 2 continued	Persona Assignment
9	10/11–10/17	Unit 3: Structure & User Journeys	Weekly UI #4 Sync Session #3
10	10/18–10/24	Unit 3: continued (Fall break)	Weekly UI #5
11	10/25–10/31	Unit 3 continued	Weekly UI #6
12	11/1–11/7	Unit 3 continued	Structure Assignment
13	11/8–11/14	Unit 4: Visual Design & Storyboards	Weekly UI #7 Sync Session #4
14	11/15–11/21	Unit 4 continued	Weekly UI #8
15	11/22–11/28	Unit 4 continued (Thanksgiving break)	
16	11/29–12/5	Unit 4 continued / Closing Materials	Storyboard Assignment

Introductory Survey / Introductory Meetings

In our first week, I ask you to answer a few questions so I can get to know you. I will hold individual 15-minute meetings with each one of you. I'll provide a schedule where you can sign up for a time that is convenient for you. During our time together I will want to learn more about your background, follow up on the goals you shared with me on your survey, and discuss any concerns you have.

Forum participation

We will use the forums to post our Weekly UIs and to showcase other assignments. I'll ask you to post links to your work there so others can see it.

There will also be a place for you to ask any questions you have to the group or me. This could be related to resources you might be seeking or anything that confused you about what you read. Post questions to the forum rather than emailing me individually. This will allow others to learn as well.

It will be important for you to review the comments your classmates and I make on all the Weekly UIs so you don't make the same mistakes the following week. In design class, you learn through critiques of your work and others' work.

Synchronous AMA sessions

There will be **four synchronous sessions** this semester. I will share with you how usability and UX design is applied in real world projects. The sessions will often be coordinated with the Unit materials. These recorded sessions will also serve as "Ask Me Anything" (AMA) hours for any and all questions. They will take place on **Thursdays from 7:45–8:30 p.m.** **You are not required to attend these sessions**, and attendance will not affect your final grade.

As stated above, those who cannot attend the sessions will have access to and should watch the recording. **You are responsible for knowing the information shared in any of the recordings and this knowledge should inform your assignments.**

This semester's synchronous sessions are on these Thursdays at 7:45pm:

- Thursday, Aug 26
- Thursday, Sept. 16
- Thursday, Oct. 14
- Thursday, Nov. 11

You can access the sessions via [this Zoom link](#) which is my personal Zoom meeting room.

Weekly UI challenges

One important way to improve as a designer is to problem solve and create solutions to visual challenges. **On eight Mondays by 12pm** in September and October you will be presented with UI challenges **to solve by 11:59pm Sunday night of the same week**. These challenges may be something like re-designing an airline boarding pass. Implicit in these challenges is understanding your users and their behaviors. As the semester progresses, you will get better and better at solving and designing solutions for these challenges. **You will receive this challenge in the form of a class announcement on Sakai and via email**. The UI challenges also will be updated in the Course Materials area in Sakai.

You will use **web.unc.edu** to create a Wordpress site to house your solutions to these challenges. By the end of the semester, you will have a collection of UI challenges that demonstrate your understanding of user behavior, problems and solutions. More details on [how to set up your site here](#).

You will post a link to your weekly UI Challenge as a blog post on your website and link to it in our forum in Sakai. Your blog post can include up to 2 sentences (max) explaining your design objective. Don't write more than that.

For each of the weeks, you will also need to make a comment on another person's Weekly UI. Before the first Weekly UI, I'll put a document up that will tell you who to do this for when. You'll need to comment on Weekly UI 1 by Wednesday at 11:59pm of the Weekly UI 2 week (although you can do it earlier if the UI is available to see.)

This participation is wrapped into your Weekly UI grade. It's not hard to do, and it doesn't have to be long - two sentences is fine. Address questions such as:

- Did the person achieve their design objective? Why or why not?
- What other design principles (visual or UX) do you see in play?

Make a meaningful comment but remember that making comments is a minor part of this course. You can't write your way to a P, you have to design your way there!

The Weekly UIs are typically hard for people who have never taken a design class. Putting your work out in public is part of the process, and you will gain expertise on receiving both positive and negative feedback gracefully. This might actually be one of the most important skills you learn in this course.

Syllabus Changes

The professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus, including project due dates and test dates. These changes will be announced as early as possible in Sakai.

Grading

You are graded according to the highest professional standards. Your assignments will be evaluated according to the rubrics distributed along with assignments. Grades will be given as follows:

- H = truly outstanding work and is given rarely.
- P = quality work that a student should be proud of.
- L = sub-standard work and cause of concern.

Grading components

- **Weekly UI challenges:** 20% of final grade (includes critique of others' work)
- **Usability test assignment:** 20% of final grade
- **Persona assignment:** 20% of final grade
- **Structure assignment:** 20% of final grade
- **Storyboard assignment:** 20% of final grade

Grading criteria

There are basic expectations that any supervisor or project manager would have for a project undertaken by a UX 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 assignments also will be evaluated for:

- adherence to basic visual design principles
- research and analysis
- presentation editing decisions
- architecture of information presentation
- aesthetic design choices
- creativity and innovation
- clarity
- usability
- written explanations of design decisions

Honor code

I expect that each student will conduct himself or herself within the guidelines of the University honor system (<http://honor.unc.edu>). All academic work should be done with the high levels of honesty and integrity that this University demands. You are expected to produce your own work in this class. If you have any questions about your responsibility or your instructor's responsibility as a faculty member under the Honor Code, please see the course instructor or Senior Associate Dean C. A. Tuggle, or you may speak with a representative of the Student Attorney Office or the Office of the Dean of Students.

Please communicate with me early about potential conflicts with assigned due dates. Please be aware that you are bound by the [Honor Code](#) when making a request for a change.

Plagiarism and Digital Media

We all use the internet for research. With a wealth of information available, including everything from pre-written essays to ready-made graphics, the potential for plagiarism is enormous. Keep in mind that as easy as it is for students to find and copy information from the internet, it is just as easy for instructors to find the same information.

To avoid plagiarizing, remember that the same rules apply to information found on the internet as to information found in print sources:

- When you take ideas or quote from a source, you must paraphrase accurately and give credit by appropriately citing and/or linking to the original source.
- If you take a sentence or phrase directly from a source, you must indicate it by using quotation marks around the direct quote and citing and/or linking to the original source.
- *****If you use an element in a project that you didn't create (for example, a vector icon you found online), you must identify the creator and where you found it.*****

Citing digital sources can be confusing. For more information on how to cite Web-based sources, see the Citing Information tutorial (<http://www.lib.unc.edu/instruct/citations/>) or contact a reference librarian (<http://www.lib.unc.edu/ask.html>).

Seeking help

If you need individual assistance, it is your responsibility to contact 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. Please feel able to contact the course instructor as soon as you perceive any warning signs of things that might adversely affect your class performance or final grade.

Diversity

I strive to make this classroom an inclusive space for all students. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to improve; I appreciate any suggestions. More broadly, our school has adopted diversity and inclusion [mission and vision statements](#) with accompanying goals. These complement the University policy on [prohibiting harassment and discrimination](#). In summary, 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. The Dean of Students (Suite 1106, Student Academic Services Building, CB# 5100, 450 Ridge Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27599-5100 or [919] 966-4042) has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the University's nondiscrimination policies.

Accessibility Resources and Service

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of reasonable accommodations, including resources and services, for students with disabilities, chronic medical conditions, a temporary disability or pregnancy complications resulting in barriers to fully accessing University courses, programs and activities.

Accommodations are determined through the Office of Accessibility Resources and Service (ARS) for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. See the ARS Website for contact information: <https://ars.unc.edu> or email ars@unc.edu. (source: <https://ars.unc.edu/faculty-staff/syllabus-statement>)

Counseling and Psychological Services

CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Go to their website: <https://caps.unc.edu/> or visit their facilities on the third floor of the Campus Health Services building for a walk-in evaluation to learn more.

Title IX

Any student who is impacted by discrimination, harassment, interpersonal (relationship) violence, sexual violence, sexual exploitation, or stalking is encouraged to seek resources on campus or in the community. Reports can be made online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>. Please contact the University's Title IX Coordinator (Elizabeth Hall, interim – titleixcoordinator@unc.edu), Report and Response Coordinators in the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office (reportandresponse@unc.edu), Counseling and Psychological Services (confidential), or the Gender Violence Services Coordinators (gvsc@unc.edu; confidential) to discuss your specific needs. Additional resources are available at safe.unc.edu.

Policy on Non-Discrimination

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community and to ensuring that educational and employment decisions are based on individuals' abilities and qualifications. Consistent with this principle and applicable laws, the University's [Policy Statement on Non-Discrimination](#) offers access to its educational programs and activities as well as employment terms and conditions without respect to race, color, gender, national origin, age, religion, creed, genetic information, disability, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Such a policy ensures that only relevant factors are considered and that equitable and consistent standards of conduct and performance are applied.

If you are experiencing harassment or discrimination, you can seek assistance and file a report through the Report and Response Coordinators (see contact info at safe.unc.edu) or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#), or online to the EOC at <https://eoc.unc.edu/report-an-incident/>.

University Policy on Attendance

No right or privilege exists that permits a student to be absent from any class meetings, except for these University Approved Absences:

1. Authorized University activities
2. Disability/religious observance/pregnancy, as required by law and approved by [Accessibility Resources and Service](#) and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC)
3. Significant health condition and/or personal/family emergency as approved by the [Office of the Dean of Students](#), [Gender Violence Service Coordinators](#), and/or the [Equal Opportunity and Compliance Office](#) (EOC).

Mask Use

All enrolled students are required to wear a mask covering your mouth and nose at all times in our classroom. This requirement is to protect our educational community -- your classmates and me -- as we learn together. If you choose not to wear a mask, or wear it improperly, I will ask you to leave immediately, and I will submit a report to the [Office of Student Conduct](#). At that point you will be disenrolled from this course for the protection of our educational community. Students who have an authorized accommodation from Accessibility Resources and Service have an exception. For additional information, see <https://carolinatogether.unc.edu/university-guidelines-for-facemasks/>.