

SYLLABUS

## EXSM 3922: Visual Design for UI **USER EXPERIENCE / USER INTERFACE DESIGN CERTIFICATE**

Online and Continuing Education | University of Alberta

**Course Dates:** September 12 – October 31, 2022 **Location/Format:** Online (Asynchronous)

| **Course instructor(s)  and contact information:** | **Davis Levine**  [dlevine1@ualberta.ca](mailto:dlevine1@ualberta.ca) Please expect 24-48 hours for email response. Response times may be slower on weekends and holidays. |
| --- | --- |
| **Program office information:** | If you have any concerns or questions regarding the course, you can contact the program staff, Monday through Friday, at techprog@ualberta.ca |
| **Date of last  syllabus revision:** | Fall, 2022  Copyright © [2022]. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the University of Alberta. Note: Should there be a discrepancy between printed and online course materials, online copies will be considered the correct and up-to-date version. No part of these notes constitutes legal advice. |

*The University of Alberta acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, and respects the histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Metis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our vibrant community.*

| ABOUT THE COURSE |
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## Course Description

Visual design is a field that has emerged by blending the principles of user interface design and graphic design. Learn how to use key design principles such as imagery, colour, typography, and form to enhance usability and improve user experience. Analyze and construct graphic/visual design using conceptual and technical approaches appropriate to clients and target audiences. Apply this knowledge to a hands-on project that integrates UI and the principles of graphic design.

## Course Outcomes

After completing this course, students should be able to:

● Define design principles, terminology, and concepts.

● Develop an understanding of imagery to elicit user mood, as well as explore the relationships between legibility, typography, and page layout.

● Demonstrate and apply knowledge of the design process and key principles of design.

● Apply an understanding of the importance that composition plays in visual communication.

● Apply a knowledge of colour theory to branding and UI.

● Apply methods for giving constructive feedback in design-related projects.

● Design logos and branding systems.

## Course Materials

* A 2 month subscription to Adobe XD
* A LinkedIn Learning account (this is free with an Edmonton Public Library card at epl.ca)

## Other Course Fees

* Visit https://www.adobe.com/ca/creativecloud/plans.html for subscriptions to Adobe software (Choose Adobe XD, $12.99/mo)

| COURSE SCHEDULE |
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## Key Course Dates

All assignment submission deadlines follow **Mountain Time (MT)**, listed below.

| **Key Dates & Times** | **Assignment** |
| --- | --- |
| September 15 | Post Assignment 1 to forum for critique |
| September 19 by 11:59 PM | Assignment 1 due |
| September 22 | Post Assignment 2 to forum for critique |
| September 26 by 11:59 PM | Assignment 2 due |
| September 29 | Post Assignment 3 to forum for critique |
| October 3 by 11:59 PM | Assignment 3 due |
| October 6 | Post Assignment 4 to forum for critique |
| October 11 by 11:59 PM | Assignment 4 due |
| October 13 | Post Assignment 5 to forum for critique |
| October 17 by 11:59 PM | Assignment 5 due |
| October 24 | Post Assignment 6 to forum for critique |
| October 31 by 11:59 PM | Assignment 6 Due |

| MODULE OVERVIEWS |
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## Module 1: Visual Literacy and Constructive Criticism

### Topics

* Vocabulary of Visual Messages: Elements, Composition, Code, and Style
* Visual literacy
* How and why we critique

### Learning Outcomes

After completing this module, students should be able to:

* Deconstruct visual messages
* Identify and describe tools being used to communicate visual messages and moods/tones in existing design
* Apply methods for giving constructive feedback during project critique
* Understand the importance of critique in the design process

### Required Readings

1. Davis, M., Hunt, J. (2017). Visual Communication Design: an introduction to design concepts in everyday experience (pp. 20–33). Bloomsbury.
2. Goldstein, M. (2021). The Purpose of Critique, Getting a Crit, Giving a Crit. http://howtocrit.com/index.html

### Supplemental Readings

1. Green, T. (2020, December 9) Learning Adobe XD: Artboards [Video]. https://www.linkedin.com/learning/learning-adobe-xd/artboards?u=74416740

### Activities & Assignments

* Assignment 1: Visual Literacy (forum post/critique: Sept 15, Assignment due: Sept 19)

## Module 2: Composition

### Topics

* Principles of composition
* Composing elements to communicate a particular mood or tone
* Philosopies of visual organization

### Learning Outcomes

After completing this module, students should be able to:

* Apply principles of composition to communicate a specific message or tone
* Understand the relationship between elements in a visual field

### Required Readings

* Bowers, J. (1999). Introduction to two-dimensional design : understanding form and function. (pp. 68–85) New York: Wiley

### Supplementary (Optional) Readings

1. Borba, D. (2020, March, 3) Adobe XD Essential Training: Create and Edit Vector Shapes [Video]. LinkedInLearning https://www.linkedin.com/learning/adobe-xd-essential-training-design-2020-q1/create-and-edit-vector-shapes?autoplay=true&u=74416740

### Activities & Assignments

* Assignment 2: Composition (forum post/critique: September 22, Assignment due: September 26)

## Module 3: Order & Sequence: Grid Systems

### Topics

* Grid systems
* Perceptual and cultural visual experience
* Getting and directing attention with contrast, figure-ground, size constancy, and scale

### Learning Outcomes

After completing this module, students should be able to:

* Apply a basic grid system to organize a series of images in Adobe XD
* Articulate the purpose and importance of grid systems in design
* Apply basic principles of contrast, size constancy, and scale to create a recognizable sequence

### Required Readings and Video Tutorials

1. Davis, M., Hunt, J. (2017). Visual Communication Design: an introduction to design concepts in everyday experience (pp. 34–47,. 54–59). Bloomsbury.
2. Babich, N. (2017, December 20). Building Better UI Designs with Layout Grids https://www.smashingmagazine.com/2017/12/building-better-ui-designs-layout-grids/ --
3. Borba, D. (2020, March, 3) Adobe XD Essential Training: Square vs. Layout Grids [Video]. LinkedInLearning.https://www.linkedin.com/learning/adobe-xd-essential-training-design-2020-q 1/square-vs-layout-grids?u=74416740
4. Green, T. (2020, December 9) Learning Adobe XD: Import Content [Video]. https://www.linkedin.com/learning/learning-adobe-xd/import-content?u=74416740

### Supplementary (Optional) Readings

1. Green, T. (2020, December 9) Learning Adobe XD: Grids and Guides [Video]. https://www.linkedin.com/learning/learning-adobe-xd/saving-your-work?u=74416740

### Activities & Assignments

* Assignment 3: Order and Sequence (forum post/critique: Sept 26, Assignment due: Oct 3)

## Module 4: Process and Form: Logo Design

### Topics

* Design Process and Methodology
* Sketching and iterating to refine two-dimensional forms
* Logo design
* Negative space

### Learning Outcomes

After completing this module, students should be able to:

* Describe typical design process methodologies
* Identify and outline your own design processes
* Refine and develop a logo idea
* Activate negative space in simple form design

### Required Readings

1. Design Process Handout
2. Samara, T. (2012). Drawing for Graphic Design. (pp.86–101) Beverly, MA: Rockport.
3. Borba, D. (2020, March, 3) Adobe XD Essential Training: Pen Tool and Strokes [Video]. LinkedInLearning https://www.linkedin.com/learning/adobe-xd-essential-training-design-2020-q1/pen-tool-and-st rokes?u=74416740

### Supplementary (Optional) Readings

1. Adams, S. (2021). Brand Design Foundations: The rules of logo design, part 1 [Video] <https://www.linkedin.com/learning/brand-design-foundations/the-rules-of-logo-design-part-1?autoplay=true&u=74416740>
2. Green, T. (2020, December 9) Learning Adobe XD: Drawing Icons [Video] https://www.linkedin.com/learning/learning-adobe-xd/drawing-icons?autoplay=true&resume=false&u=74416740

### Activities & Assignments

* Assignment 4: Process and Form (forum post/critique: October 6, Assignment due: October 11)

## Module 5: Applying Colour

### Topics

* Types of colour (CMYK vs. RGB)
* Colour wheel and colour vocabulary
* Colour interaction
* Colour and meaning
* Adobe Colour
* Accessibility

### Learning Outcomes

After completing this module, students should be able to:

* Differentiate between CMYK and RGB methods of creating colour
* Understand the purpose of the colour wheel and apply colour vocabulary
* Identify complex colour relationships and the factors that influence them
* Thoughtfully describe the nuances of cultural associations with colour
* Use Adobe Colour to create colour palettes to be applied to existing branding in XD
* Understand the relationship of colour contrast and accessibility standards

### Required Readings

1. Bowers, J. (1999). Introduction to two-dimensional design : understanding form and function. (pp. 52–65) New York: Wiley.
2. Davis, M., Hunt, J. (2017). Visual Communication Design: an introduction to design concepts in everyday experience (pp. 48–53). Bloomsbury.

### Supplementary (Optional) Readings

1. Borba, D. (2020, March, 3) Adobe XD Essential Training: Layers and the Selection Model [Video]. LinkedInLearning https://www.linkedin.com/learning/adobe-xd-essential-training-design-2020-q1/layers-and-the-selection-model?u=74416740
2. Borba, D. (2020, March, 3) Adobe XD Essential Training: Colour Picker [Video]. LinkedInLearning https://www.linkedin.com/learning/adobe-xd-essential-training-design-2020-q1/the-color-picker ?u=74416740
3. Borba, D. (2020, March, 3) Adobe XD Essential Training: Linear and Radial Gradients [Video]. LinkedInLearning https://www.linkedin.com/learning/adobe-xd-essential-training-design-2020-q1/linear-and-radia l-gradients?u=74416740

### Activities & Assignments

* Assignment 5: Process and Form (forum post/critique: Oct 13, Assignment due: Oct 17)

## Module 6: Typography and Design Systems

### Topics

* Fonts
* Typographic legibility (Size and spacing considerations)
* Creating a typographic hierarchy
* Readibility and legibility
* Visual design systems

### Learning Outcomes

After completing this module, students should be able to:

* Confidently use a grid to structure a page layout
* Make typographic decisions that provide maximum legibility and facilitate understanding
* Create a clear typographic hierarchy to organize large amounts of text
* Confidently utilize colour, layout and typography to create a unified composition

### Required Readings

1. Visocky O'Grady, J. and K. (2008) The Information Design Handbook. w(pp.97-131) Georgetown, ON: F+W Publications. --
2. Borba, D. (2020, March, 3) Adobe XD Essential Training: Add and Manage Text Styles [Video]. LinkedInLearning https://www.linkedin.com/learning/adobe-xd-essential-training-design-2020-q1/add-and-manag e-text-styles?u=74416740
3. Borba, D. (2020, March, 3) Adobe XD Essential Training: Point and Area Text [Video]. LinkedInLearning https://www.linkedin.com/learning/adobe-xd-essential-training-design-2020-q1/point-and-areatext?u=74416740
4. Borba, D. (2020, March, 3) Adobe XD Essential Training: Access Free UI Kits [Video]. LinkedInLearning https://www.linkedin.com/learning/adobe-xd-essential-training-design-2020-q1/access-incredibl e-free-ui-kits?u=74416740

### Activities & Assignments

Assignment 6: Typography and Design Systems (forum posts/critiques: Oct 24 Assignment due: Oct 31)

| COURSE ASSESSMENT & GRADED ACTIVITIES |
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## Assessments Overview and Weighting

Please refer to the “Key Course Dates” section for a list of all assessment due dates.

| **Assessment** | **Weighting** |
| --- | --- |
| Assignment 1: Visual Literacy and Constructive Critiscm | **15**% |
| Assignment 2: Composition | **15**% |
| Assignment 3: Order and Sequence: Grid Systems | **15**% |
| Assignment 4: Process and Form: Logo Design | **15**% |
| Assignment 5: Applying Colour | **15**% |
| Assignment 6: Typography and Design Systems | **25**% |
| **TOTAL** | **100 %** |

Marking criteria for all assignments will be specified within the instructions for the assignment. Please review these criteria before completing your assignments.

## Assessment Details and Evaluation Criteria

#### Evaluation Criteria

Please see Assignment handout documents for all assessment criteria.

| COURSE-SPECIFIC POLICY STATEMENTS |
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## Penalty for Late Assessments

In this course, the penalty for late assessments will be a loss of **20** % of the assessment’s weight **per day**. If you have extenuating circumstances preventing you from handing in your assignments on time, please contact your instructor *before* the due date to discuss the potential options.

## Citation Style

Written assignments must comply with a University-accepted citation style, either MLA or APA. For more information, visit the [University Libraries website](http://www.library.ualberta.ca) and click 'Citation Guides' in the Library Services menu.

## Understanding Your Grades

The University of Alberta uses a letter grading system with a four-point scale of numerical equivalents for calculating grade point averages. Grades reflect judgments of student achievement made by instructors. These judgments are based on a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class.

All final results are reported using a letter grade or grade point value.

The following table presents an approximate guide for understanding the relationship between percentage grades and letter grades:

| **A+** | **A** | **A-** | **B+** | **B** | **B-** | **C+** | **C** | **C-** | **D+** | **D** | **F** | **Letter Grade** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 96–100 | 91–95 | 86–90 | 81–85 | 77–80 | 72–76 | 69–71 | 64–68 | 60–63 | 55–59 | 50–54 | < 50 | % range |

| ONLINE AND CONTINUING EDUCATION  GRADING POLICY |
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**This section is not applicable in general studies courses, as all EXGEN courses are non-graded. This section applies to all Continuing Education graded courses.**

## Official Grade Notification

Students can access and print their final grades ***only*** through Bear Tracks, an online service provided to University of Alberta students. [Click here to log into Bear Tracks](https://www.beartracks.ualberta.ca). To learn more about Bear Tracks and your CCID, please visit [Bear Tracks Help | Office of the Registrar](https://www.ualberta.ca/registrar/registration-and-courses/bear-tracks-resources).

Any other edition or statement of a final grade should be considered unofficial, including those released in eClass or other means. In the rare event, access is not available, a hard copy may be requested through the Program Office. Program Offices will not release grades over the telephone under any circumstances. ***If you would like to receive an email notifying you when your final grades are available, please sign on to Bear Tracks and visit the Grades section.***

## The University of Alberta Grading System

The following table provides information about the meaning of letter grades:

| **Grading in Continuing Education Courses \*** | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Descriptor** | **Letter Grade** | **Grade Point Value** |
| Excellent | A+ | 4.0 |
| A | 4.0 |
| A- | 3.7 |
| Good | B+ | 3.3 |
| B | 3.0 |
| B- | 2.7 |
| Satisfactory | C+ | 2.3 |
| C | 2.0 |
| C- | 1.7 |
| Poor | D+ | 1.3 |
| D | 1.0 |
| Failure | F | 0 |

\*These descriptors above refer to continuing education and undergraduate courses using alpha grades. Graduate courses use an alternative descriptor set.

Courses that are graded using the “completed requirements” criteria use the following grades and remarks:

| **Final Grades** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| CR | Completed requirements; no grade point value assigned. |
| NC | Failure; no grade point value assigned. |

A complete list of current final grades and remarks can be found §[23.4](http://www.registrar.ualberta.ca/calendar/Regulations-and-Information/Academic-Regulation/23.4.html#23.4) of the University Calendar.

## Failing Grades

Students will receive a failing grade under the following conditions:

* if the student has failed to meet the course requirements at the required standards stipulated by the course instructor, e.g. the student’s aggregate grade on submitted assignments is lower than the minimum passing grade for the course;
* if the student has failed to withdraw from the course. Non-attendance does not constitute notice of withdrawal from a course. If the student chooses to withdraw from a course, the student must contact the Student Service Centre and submit a written withdrawal request.

## Grade Appeals

The assignment of grades is the responsibility of the course instructor. Any concerns regarding grades should first be discussed with the instructor. Students may contact their respective Program Office with grade appeal requests if the problem is not resolved. Online and Continuing Education has developed procedures so learners who encounter concerns and problems related to academic standing, learning assessment/grades, program requirements, or other matters may have them reviewed equitably and expeditiously. Copies of these procedures can be obtained from the Program Office.

| ONLINE AND CONTINUING EDUCATION POLICY STATEMENTS |
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## Course Outline Policies

Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Academic Regulations](https://calendar.ualberta.ca/content.php?catoid=33&navoid=9816#evaluation_procedures_and_grading_system) section of the University Calendar.

## Academic Integrity

The University of Alberta is committed to the highest academic integrity and honesty standards. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the Code of Student Behaviour provisions and avoid any behaviour that could result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.

## Recording in the Classroom

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used solely for personal study and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

**Please note that online synchronous meetings for this course may be recorded for the benefit of the class.** Any recordings of this course will be disclosed to other students enrolled in this section of the class, the instructor, and any other teaching assistants and/or course administrators who may support the course. It is recommended that students remove all identifiable and personal belongings from the space in which they will be participating. Students have the right not to participate in the recording and, in such cases, are advised to turn off their cameras and audio recording devices before recording; students can still participate in online synchronous sessions through text-based chat. Unless otherwise specified, recordings will be saved to Zoom cloud storage, accessible via eClass, and made available for as long as the course eClass section remains active. Please direct any questions about this digital collection of recordings to your course instructor.

## Accommodating Disabilities

If you have a disability or condition that may require some modifications, please contact Accessibility Resources (1-80 Students’ Union Building; PH: (780) 492-3381; TTY: (780) 248-1665) and obtain a determination as to what accommodations should be made.

## Refunds, Withdrawal, and Transfer Information

If you wish to drop or withdraw from this course, you must do so by the official drop or withdrawal deadline. Please refer to the [Refunds, Withdrawals, and Transfers page](https://ext.ualberta.ca/information/policies/refunds-withdrawals-transfers) for information about official drop and withdrawal policies and deadlines and guidelines for the withdrawal process. Non-attendance does not constitute notice of withdrawal from a course. In graded courses, please note that a failing grade can be assigned to any student who has not officially withdrawn from the course.

## Your @ualberta.ca Email Address

The University of Alberta uses email to communicate important information and notices to our students, and you have been automatically assigned an @ualberta.ca email account. It is your responsibility to check your @ualberta.ca email account regularly.

Visit the [New Student Checklist](https://www.ualberta.ca/extension/information/for-students/checklist#email) for more information.

## Applying for Graduation

Continuing Education students who expect to complete the certificate or citation program requirements by the end of the winter term must apply for graduation by Feb. 1 using Bear Tracks under Academics > My Academics > Graduation.

## In Case of Emergency

All students attending classes at UofA campuses MUST be familiar with the Emergency protocols. [Click here to visit UofA Emergency Procedures](https://www.ualberta.ca/facilities-operations/portfolio/emergency-management-office/emergency-procedures/index.html). Enterprise Square has location-specific emergency protocols. [Click here to visit Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures for Enterprise Square](https://www.ualberta.ca/facilities-operations/media-library/documents/enterprise-square-emergency-procedures.pdf).

## Records in General Studies Courses

Online and Continuing Education general studies courses (those with the prefix EXGEN) are non-graded and will appear on the transcript as “Non-graded.”

## Records in Courses in Certificate and Citation Programs

Online and Continuing Education courses offered as part of certificate or citation programs are assessed. Any learner, meeting course prerequisites can take a course that is part of a credentialed program. If you are not registered to take the full program at this time, taking a graded course gives you the opportunity to participate in assessments and earn a grade that reflects your achievement. Grades earned can later be applied to applicable program requirements. Grades in Continuing Education courses contribute to your University of Alberta Continuing Education GPA. University of Alberta undergraduate and graduate GPAs are calculated independently.

If you do not wish to complete assessments, receive a grade, or apply course credit to a credential, you must register to “audit” the course. Courses will appear on the transcript as “Audit.” Students registered into graded courses that do not self-identify and officially register as audit student will receive the grade earned.