

design at uci presents

Cracking the Design Interview.

Feb 25 | 6:30 PM Social Ecology II 1306



Interview
season
has arrived.

are you
prepared?



first, some reflection...

Your designer career **checklist**:

- ☐ Resume
- ☐ **Portfolio***
- ☐ Interview



elements of design interviews

product & ux

Phone Screen

Design “Technical” Interview

Portfolio Review

Take Home Design Challenge

App Critique

Whiteboard Challenge

elements of design interviews

graphic/visual

Phone Screen

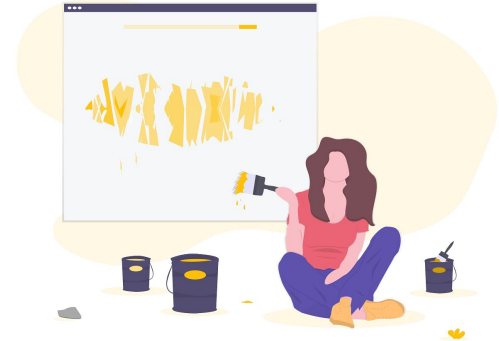
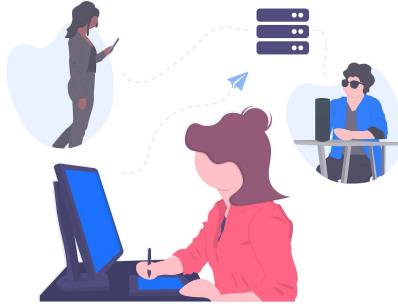
Design “Technical” Interview

Portfolio Review

Take Home Design Challenge

some considerations:

who are you? What kind of *designer* are you?



some considerations:

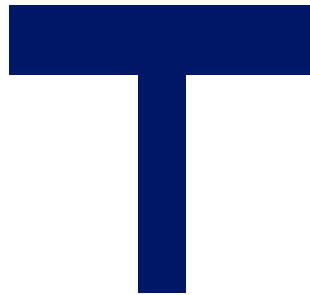
your skillset



“I” Shaped



Generalist



“T” Shaped

the phone screen



What the interviewer is looking for

phone screen

Are you a culture fit?

→ Why company x? Why design at company x?

Brief understanding of your process?

→ Can you walk me through a project on your portfolio?



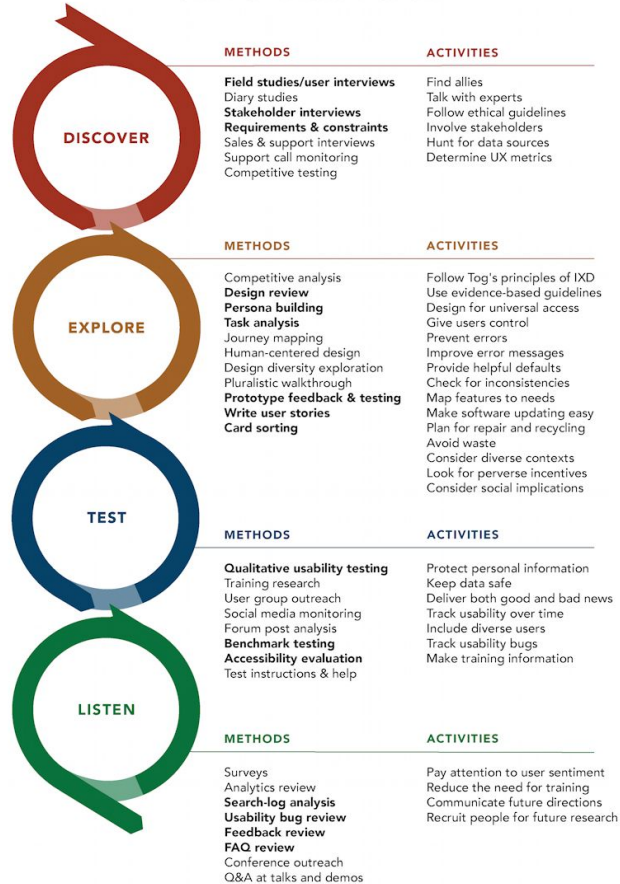
How to tackle this

phone screen

- Research the company and their design culture?
- Understand their products, market, and some design challenges
- Know your portfolio in and out



UX ACTIVITIES IN THE PRODUCT & SERVICE DESIGN CYCLE



Bold methods are some of the most commonly used.

portfolio review



What the interviewer is looking for

portfolio review

- Your design process, problem solving approach, and decision making.
- Evaluating how you work in teams (with other designers or PMs)



How to tackle this (for product/ux positions)

portfolio review

Prepare to talk about:

→ 2 to 3 projects

→ **problems you were solving**

→ design decisions + iterations

→ highlight key solutions

→ your process (@ a high-level)

→ challenges

→ collaboration

→ what you learned



advice from industry professional.

Google Interaction Designer,

Tiffany Eaton

on her experience interviewing with Microsoft

“

I didn't just talk about the project; I told a story about how my teammates and I came up with the idea, the struggles we had as a team, how we overcame it, and what I learned from the experience. By framing every answer like a story, the interviewer can relate to you better and it creates a better interview atmosphere.

”

quick tips on portfolio building from Google



- Consider your audience and guide the user through your projects
- Clear and easy navigation
- Break up content with concise points that highlight challenges, insights, takeaways

S. T. A. R. Method

Situation – Explain the experience (context)

Trigger – What was the problem you needed to solve?

Action – The steps you took to solve it

Result – Was the outcome positive or negative? (describe you learned or what you would take away from the experience)





design “technical” interview



What the interviewer is looking for

“technical” interview

Assessing your design skills

→ What tools do you use? Why?

To understand your design process

→ Tell me about a project that went well?



What to expect

“technical” interview



Questions about

→ Strengths/weaknesses

→ Your preferred and/or most familiar tools

→ Your design style

→ the work you did, your design decisions in that work

→ design trade-offs + alternatives

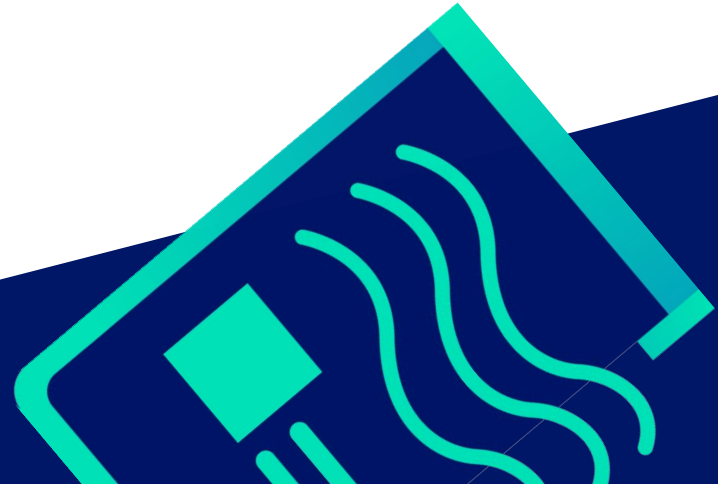
take home design challenge



Questions + topics to expect

take home design challenge

- Design process, problem solving approach, and decision making
- The work you can produce in short time span



How to tackle this


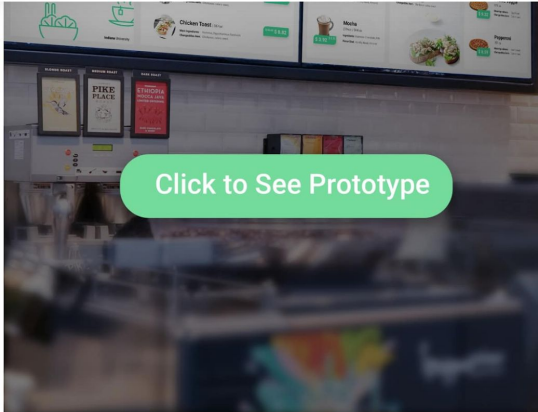
take home design challenge

- Light user research (~ 5 interviews, online user research)
- focus on 1-2 user problems
- show process, sketches, wireframes, any prototypes and interactions
- Focus on a few high fidelity screens or 1-2 flows



Example | [Google Design Challenge](#)

take home design challenge



田豆

Work Process About

Click to See Prototype

Welcome to
IU Cafe
9:00 am - 5:00 pm | Mon - Fri.
9:00 am - 10:30 am | Breakfast
We set out to create a destination on IU campus that promotes lively discussion and friendships.
Start Exploring
Indiana University

CONTEXT
Google Design Challenge
TIMELINE
7 Days (2018.3)

PROCESS
User Research
Ideation
Conceptual Testing
Iteration
Usability Testing

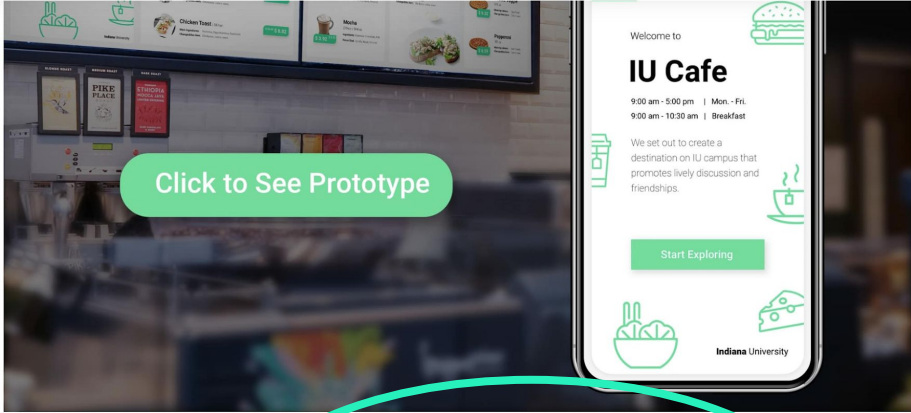
METHODS
Interview
Contextual Inquiry
Card Sorting
Rapid Prototyping

Example | [Google Design Challenge](#)

take home design challenge

田豆

Work Process About



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app/design
critique

What the interviewer is looking for

app/design critique

- To gauge your product thinking ability
- Understanding of IxD and UI trends/principles
- Understand how you provide critique and feedback

How to tackle this

app/design critique

- Study most common apps: Google Maps, Lyft, Uber, Yelp, Spotify, Venmo , AirBNB, Apple Music
- Break down target user groups, problem app is solving, and some of the design patterns
- Get up to speed on design principles and current design trends (thru Medium, Mobbin, & Dribbble)

Let's try a *mock*

portfolio review

If you have a portfolio (or have at least one design project):

- Pick (1) piece! And talk about it with consideration of our tips
- Remember the S.T.A.R. method
- A board member will come around and act as an interviewer

Things to talk about:

- What was your process? (ux research, designing?)
- Why did you design it that way — your design decisions.
- How did you validate your ideas? How did you iterate/improve upon them?
- Any challenges? How did you overcome then?
- If it wasn't a solo project, how did you collaborate?
- What did you learn?



Let's try a *mock*

app critique

If you don't a portfolio or design project:

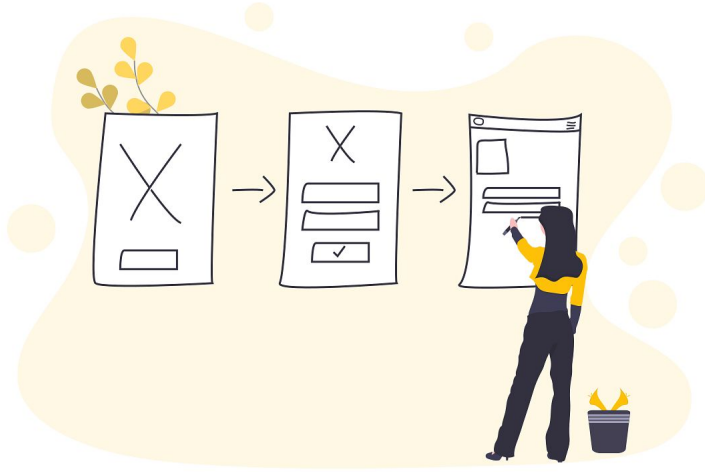
- Pick an application or website you believe is designed well and critique it.
- A board member will come around and act as an interviewer

Things to talk about:

- Break down target user groups, problem app is solving, and some of the design patterns it uses
- Remember design principles and consider how the app applies or fails to apply them
- What are some ways you can improve upon the app/website?



whiteboarding challenge



Some questions/topics to expect:

Understand *your* design process and how you approach a problem

tips on tackling the

whiteboarding challenge

1

Specify the challenge

- Context of challenge
- Define goals
- Device, timeline, constraints

2

Identify users

- **Who** are the users
- What are some assumptions about their **behaviors, problems, and needs**
- Common **use cases**
- Create 1 or 2 user personas

tips on tackling the

whiteboarding challenge

3

User Scenarios/Story

- Take your persona and craft a story for that user
- Write down main steps:
 - ex) 1. Search for artist, 2. Select song, 3. Fav song

4

Draw out key screens

- Focus on key screens for 1 user flow
- Play it safe: use common IxD and UI patterns
- Be neat

5

Summarize

- How do the screens you've drawn tie back to the user problems and needs you identified?
- How to measure success?

Prompt/Key words

Goal Q+A

- user/biz goals
- opportunity
- benefits
- metrics
- successful if...

Problem

Goal

Users, Needs

- 2 users
- stories
- needs

Context

- time?
- other people
- physically?
- Device
- competitors

Ideas

Features that fulfill needs
within constraints

Flow

Sketches

Success

Assumptions

ORDERING UI

- AIRPORT : International
- Food/Drinks.
- Payment
- Tablet + App

USERS

- Business . family .
- USE CASES:
 - Take out + entertainment
 - Time limit : 1 hr - Game
 - video
- Benefit:
 - skip line
 - pay by card
 - Fast
 - language
 - Flight status (Alert)

Main Steps:

- Business + DineIn (1 hr)
- Choose language
- Menu (take out option)
- Order
- Pay
- Status
- Entertainment
- Food :D
- (optional) Boarding pass/cord for Alert

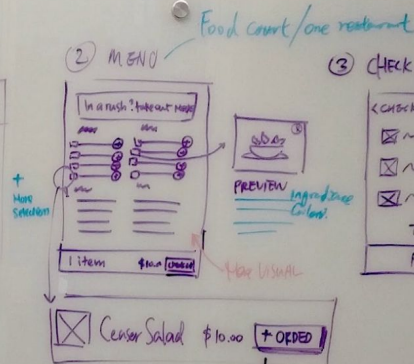
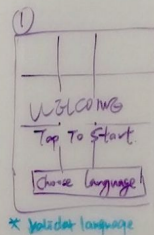
? Family, multiple device?

? Own device?

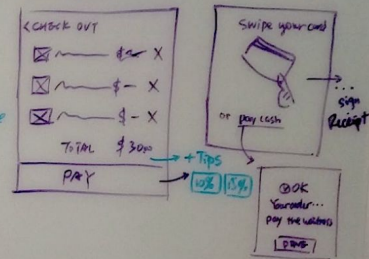
? Accessories

? Convert Currency

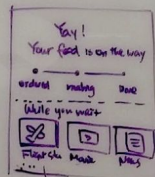
? Terminal map



③ CHECK OUT



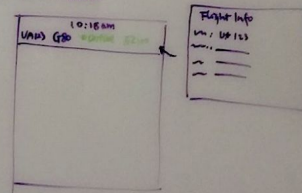
③ Status



④ Flight Status



⑤ Main Screen



Let's try a *mock*

whiteboard challenge

- Can do solo or work with someone
- Claim a whiteboard (either on wall or the boards)
- Take a picture of the relevant prompt

Things to cover:

- What is the problem you are solving?
- Target audience / Relevant user groups
- Detail context + constraints
- Come up with a variety of ideas/solutions and go forth with one
- Outline the user flow
- Start sketching wireframes
- How would you measure success?



prompts

Product/UI/UX – Meeting Room UI

Design a user interface on a small or large screen to let someone know whether a meeting room is free, how long for, and allow the person to book on the spot if necessary.

This application is intended for use by anybody who might need a meeting room in a large office. You should consider that the people requiring the room might need it urgently, there may already be people in the room, they might only need it for 10–15 minutes, and that there might be more than one meeting room in the building.

Please propose a design for the user interface and the flow for booking the room, with a maximum of three screens.

Graphic/Visual – Logo

Redesign a logo for the Swipe Out Hunger (<http://www.swipehunger.org/>). The organization is leading force in addressing hunger amongst college students. Their aim is to allow students to donate their excess swipes/funds from their meal plans to food insecure peers.

They want an exciting logo that somehow symbolizes the work they are doing.





Activity Time

Additional tips

- Focus on high level things (problems, user needs) instead of specific details
- Craft persona(s) that encapsulate multiple user types
- Focus on common UI and IxD Patterns
- Don't skip key screens
- Be neat and write clearly
- Don't be afraid to ask questions
- KEEP TRACK OF YOUR TIME

starting practicing!

design resources

Product/UI/UX Design

Whiteboarding challenges

- designchallenge.xyz

Study up on design trends

- [Mobbin.design](https://mobbin.design), Medium
- [Dribbble](https://dribbble.com)

Graphic/Visual Design

Design Forums

- graphicdesignforum.com

Study up on design trends

- Behance, [Dribbble](https://dribbble.com)

advice from industry professional.

Blizzard UX Designer,
Mandi Gonzales

On personal tips to Design at UCI students

“

Based on my experience, I've prepared myself to talk through any of my portfolio pieces, they will ask about process and if/how you work with others, be able to describe a time where you had a disagreement/difficult situation and how you handled it, etc. Being able to tell specific stories is super helpful, it makes your responses more memorable and believable.”

Design exercises are a huge part of the interview process, I've done one on the spot via Skype and have been sent prompts to prepare a presentation on one of my case studies from my portfolio

”