

Core Interaction (Studio)

Parsons School of Design
School of Art, Media and Technology
Spring 2018

PUCD 2125; CRN 3179
Monday, Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 11:40 a.m.
Parsons 2 W 13th, Room 1006

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Course Description

In this course we will provide a thorough and elaborate study of interactive concepts and techniques for applications. We will conduct an extensive investigation into the interface, mechanism, controls, and aims of interactive works. Students will learn how to design and develop complex interactive projects, undertaking comprehensive research and directing their thinking process from brainstorming to final outcome. This course will provide students with the tools to conceive, plan, and develop an interactive system, and they will become aware of the importance of their role in the development of interactive media.

Learning Outcomes

By the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Use a basic vocabulary of interactive media to both give and respond to critique productively. Including individual evaluation through the instructor, group critique in class, outside critique as well as written anonymous critique.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the iterative making process in interaction design, using incremental methods such as prototyping, user research and evaluation to build toward more advanced work.
 - This includes: Personas, user interviews, card sorting, sketching and wireframing, storyboarding, mock-ups and paper prototypes.
- Conceptualize a product for the web and realize it through coding.
- Evaluate the difference in designing interfaces for different kind of devices, their limitations and specific user situation including responsive websites and apps for mobile.
- Evaluate how typography and its variables are applied to interactive systems to facilitate orientation, support usability and create consistency .
- Research historic and current design precedents to contextualize own work.

- Be able to archive and document work that is printed, on screen or time based in a reflective manner for learning portfolio
- Combine their artistic creativity with technology related to the internet.
- Demonstrate a comprehension of skills, methods, techniques and processes to realize interactive systems (see competency)
- Develop a strong understanding for the cultural context of interaction design and how it relates to the internet as a medium.

Assessable Tasks

In addition to the following assignments, in-class coursework and readings will regularly be assigned.

Assignment 1: The Post

As graphic designers, it is important to understand the internet and its platforms as a medium. What do certain platforms allow for that others do not? How might a platform transform a user's perception of content? Does the design of some platforms feel invisible? What are the implications of posting content on one platform as opposed to another?

For our first project, find a piece of content that has surpassed its copyright (archive.org, ubu.web are good places to start your search). Think about the content's form and message. What qualities stick out to you (is it divided into stanzas? is it repetitive? does it have a linear narrative? was it meant to be rearranged? can it be rearranged? does it have [no letter e](#)?)?

Publish your selected text on a platform of your choice. Think about how this act of publishing emphasizes a quality of your content (it does not have to be all at once). How has the content changed through your platform? What is something new that this publishing act has revealed about your content?

Document your project through screenshots and think carefully about its presentation.

Assignment 2: The Hyperlink

The internet is often portrayed as a web of points. Each webpage is a point with hyperlinks allowing the user's transportation from one webpage to another. The narrative flow of these links begin to create is often fragmented and jumpy (a quality many apps and websites have begun to hid)— the effect isn't necessarily non-linear, but rather, begins to forge it's own custom narrative.

Select two pieces of content that complement each other in some way. Design and develop a website around the hyperlink that intertwines your selected content and produces a new narrative.

Assignment 3: Innovation and Invention

This assignment is based on Bruno Latour's vignette, *The Berliner Key*.

Take notes on the influential role of key on the surrounding individual's behaviors. What technologies do you know of that have influenced behaviors at a similar scale? For this project, select and research a specific technological object. Design and build a website that interprets this object's behavioral influence.

Assignment 4 (Final): Observations

Jean Baudrillard outlines collections as the collective separation of objects of their utility. An object within a true collection becomes purely aesthetic. A true collection acts as a mirror to its owner—it is given and retains meaning through the owner's presence and care. Create or find a collection of at least 40 objects. Your assignment is divided into two stages— organization and interpretation:

1. Begin to organize this collection through the design and development of a simple website. What does organizing this collection begin to reveal? What patterns are present? What discrepancies? What themes does this collection hold? How does the site's design reflect the structures of the collection?
2. Based on your findings, design and develop a second website that is mobile-first. What about your collection excites you the most? How might this aspect of your collection be presented best in a website? This website may or may not contain artifacts of your collection, but should clearly communicate an interpretation of your collection through its design and interaction.

Final Grade Calculation

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| Assessment | % |
| Inclass and Takehome Assignments | 50% |
| Final Project | 30% |
| In-class Participation and Attitude | 20% |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Course Outline

Below is a rough outline of the semester (subject to change).

newschool.edu/student-services/academic-calendar/ for the complete academic calendar.

| Week | Date | Topic, Activity, Assignment |
|------|--------|--|
| 1 | Jan 22 | Introductions/Basics/Working Environment Introduction + Syllabus Overview Design Check-in Good Design/Bad Design Presentations <i>Assignment: The Post,</i> <i>Reading: Dispersion</i> |
| | Jan 25 | The Design Process Design process lecture <i>The Post</i> Presentations <i>Assignment: The Post</i> |
| 2 | Jan 29 | The Post The Post Critique <i>Assignment: The Hyperlink (find content and present connections)</i> <i>Reading: The Garden of Forking Paths, Uncreative Writing</i> |
| | Feb 1 | The Hyperlink A brief history of the Internet Lecture <i>The Hyperlink</i> Class Discussion <i>Assignment: The Hyperlink (content architecture)</i> |
| 3 | Feb 5 | Typography on the Web Typography on the Web Lecture In-Class Assignment <i>The Hyperlink</i> Class Critique <i>Assignment: The Hyperlink (content arch. finalized, initial designs)</i> |
| | Feb 8 | Design to Code How to prepare designs for coding, Lecture <i>The Hyperlink</i> Class Critique <i>Assignment: The Hyperlink (finalize designs, begin coding)</i> |
| 4 | Feb 12 | Work Session Individual Meetings <i>The Hyperlink</i> Group Troubleshooting <i>Assignment: The Hyperlink (finish coding, Due next class)</i> |

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| | Feb 15 | The Hyperlink Final Critique The Hyperlink: Final Critique <i>Assignment: Innovation and Invention (I&I)</i> <i>Reading: The Berliner Key</i> |
| 5 | Feb 19 | NO CLASS (President's Day) |
| | Feb 22 | Interaction Design Class Discussion: <i>The Berliner Key</i> Present I&I object + research <i>Assignment: I&I (site ideas & initial wireframes)</i> |
| 6 | Feb 26 | Interaction Design, pt 2 History of UI Lecture Class Critique <i>Assignment: I&I (refined wireframes and site flow)</i> |
| | Mar 1 | User Interaction Discussion on user testing techniques In-class exercise <i>Assignment: I&I (refined wireframe + initial design skin ready for prototyping, questionnaire for feedback)</i> |
| 7 | Mar 5 | User Testing In-class user testing <i>Assignment: I&I (refined site design based on feedback, begin programming)</i> <i>Reading: Autoprogettazione</i> |
| | Mar 8 | Enabling the User Class Discussion on <i>Autoprogettazione</i> Class critiques <i>Assignment: I&I (design finalized, continue programming)</i> |
| 8 | Mar 12 | Work Session Individual Meetings + work day <i>Assignment: I&I (finish design and programming)</i> |
| | Mar 15 | Innovation and Invention Critique Innovation and Invention Final Critique <i>Assignment: Observations (your collection and its themes)</i> <i>Reading: System of Collecting</i> |
| 9 | Mar 26 | Observations, Day 1 Class Discussion on <i>System of Collecting</i> Group Discussions on Collections <i>Assignment: Observations (content architecture and site flow)</i> |

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| | Mar 29 | Observations, Day 2 Class Critique on content architecture and site flow. <i>Assignment: Observations (finalized architecture, flow, and initial site designs)</i> |
| 10 | Apr 2 | Observations, Day 3 Class critique on designs <i>Assignment: Observations (finalize designs and begin programming)</i> |
| | Apr 5 | Troubleshooting Collections Work day + individual meetings <i>Assignment: Observations (finish programming, first site due next class)</i> |
| 11 | Apr 9 | Something is wrong with the Internet Discussion on <i>Something is wrong with the Internet</i> <i>Assignment: Observations (Prepare presentation on findings for final site (mobile-first design))</i> |
| | Apr 12 | Presentations Class Presentations on collection findings <i>Assignment: Observations (Prepare content architecture + site flow designs)</i> |
| 12 | Apr 16 | Observations, together Group Critiques <i>Assignment: Observations (Revise site flow + architecture and begin initial design skins)</i> |
| | Apr 19 | User Testing In-class user testing <i>Assignment: Observations (select design route)</i> |
| 13 | Apr 23 | Ultrareality In-class Assignment <i>Assignment: Observations (revise designs)</i> |
| | Apr 26 | Work Session Individual meetings <i>Assignment: Observations (revise designs, begin programming)</i> |
| 14 | Apr 30 | Cyber-peasant, cyber-pleasant? In-class Assignment <i>Assignment: Observations (Finalize designs)</i> |
| | May 3 | Work Session Individual meetings <i>Assignment: Observations (continue programming)</i> |
| 15 | May 7 | Work Session Individual meetings <i>Assignment: Observations (continue programming)</i> |

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| | May 10 | Work Session Individual meetings <i>Assignment: Observations (finalize site, make live for critique)</i> |
| 16 | May 14 | Final Class <i>Final Critique for Observations w/ Guest Critics (tbd)</i> |

Readings

There is no assigned textbook for this course, however readings and tutorials will be assigned each week and available through the site class (s18coreinteraction.leigler.tk).

Materials and Supplies

Students are required to obtain a free account at GitHub (<http://github.com>) and bring a laptop computer to class each week.

Resources

The university provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence. These resources include:

- The University (and associated) Libraries: <http://library.newschool.edu>
- The University Learning Center: <http://www.newschool.edu/learning-center>
- University Disabilities Service: www.newschool.edu/student-disability-services/

In keeping with the university's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with me privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to contact Student Disability Service (SDS). SDS will conduct an intake and, if appropriate, the Director will provide an academic accommodation notification letter for you to bring to me. At that point, I will review the letter with you and discuss these accommodations in relation to this course.

Making Center

The Making Center is a constellation of shops, labs, and open workspaces that are situated across the New School to help students express their ideas in a variety of materials and methods. We have resources to help support woodworking, metalworking, ceramics and pottery work, photography and film, textiles, printmaking, 3D printing, manual and CNC machining, and more. A staff of technicians and student workers provide expertise and maintain the different shops and labs. Safety is a primary concern, so each area has policies for access, training, and etiquette that students and faculty should be familiar with. Many areas require specific orientations or trainings before access is granted. Detailed information about

the resources available, as well as schedules, trainings, and policies can be found at resources.parsons.edu.

Grading Standards

A student's final grades and GPA are calculated using a 4.0 scale. Please note that while both are listed here, the 4.0 scale does not align mathematically with the numeric scale based on percentages of 100 points.

A [4.0; 95 – 100%]

Work of exceptional quality, which often goes beyond the stated goals of the course

A- [3.7; 90 – <95%]

Work of very high quality

B+ [3.3; 87 – <90%]

Work of high quality that indicates higher than average abilities

B [3.0; 83 – <87%]

Very good work that satisfies the goals of the course

B- [2.7; 80 – <83%]

Good work

C+ [2.3; 77 – <80%]

Above-average work

C [2.0; 73 – <77%]

Average work that indicates an understanding of the course material; passable
Satisfactory completion of a course is considered to be a grade of C or higher.

C- [1.7; 70 – <73%]

Passing work but below good academic standing

D [1.0; 60 – <70%]

Below-average work that indicates a student does not fully understand the assignments;
Probation level though passing for credit

F [0.0; 0 – <60%]
Failure, no credit

Grade of W

The grade of W may be issued by the Office of the Registrar to a student who officially withdraws from a course within the applicable deadline. There is no academic penalty, but the grade will appear on the student transcript. A grade of W may also be issued by an instructor to a graduate student (except at Parsons and Mannes) who has not completed course requirements nor arranged for an Incomplete.

Grade of Z

The grade of Z is issued by an instructor to a student who has not attended or not completed all required work in a course but did not officially withdraw before the withdrawal deadline. It differs from an “F,” which would indicate that the student technically completed requirements but that the level of work did not qualify for a passing grade.

Grades of Incomplete

The grade of I, or temporary incomplete, may be granted to a student under unusual and extenuating circumstances, such as when the student’s academic life is interrupted by a medical or personal emergency. This mark is not given automatically but only upon the student’s request and at the discretion of the instructor. A Request for Incomplete form must be completed and signed by student and instructor. The time allowed for completion of the work and removal of the “I” mark will be set by the instructor with the following limitations:

Work must be completed no later than the seventh week of the following fall semester for spring or summer term incompletes and no later than the seventh week of the following spring semester for fall term incompletes. Grades of “I” not revised in the prescribed time will be recorded as a final grade of “F” by the Office of the Registrar.

Divisional, Program and Class Policies

- Responsibility

Students are responsible for all assignments, even if they are absent. Late assignments, failure to complete the assignments for class discussion and/or critique, and lack of preparedness for in-class discussions, presentations and/or critiques will jeopardize your successful completion of this course.

- Participation

Class participation is an essential part of class and includes: keeping up with reading, assignments, projects, contributing meaningfully to class discussions, active participation in group work, and coming to class regularly and on time.

- Attendance

Parsons' attendance guidelines were developed to encourage students' success in all aspects of their academic programs. Full participation is essential to the successful completion of coursework and enhances the quality of the educational experience for all, particularly in courses where group work is integral; thus, Parsons promotes high levels of attendance. Students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly and in compliance with the standards stated in this course syllabus.

While attendance is just one aspect of active participation, absence from a significant portion of class time may prevent the successful attainment of course objectives. A significant portion of class time is generally defined as the equivalent of three weeks, or 20%, of class time. Lateness or early departure from class may be recorded as one full absence. Students may be asked to withdraw from a course if habitual absenteeism or tardiness has a negative impact on the class environment.

Whether the course is a lecture, seminar or studio, faculty will assess each student's performance against all of the assessment criteria in determining the student's final grade.

- Canvas

Use of Canvas may be an important resource for this class. Students should check it for announcements before coming to class each week.

- Delays

In rare instances, I may be delayed arriving to class. If I have not arrived by the time class is scheduled to start, you must wait a minimum of thirty minutes for my arrival. In the event that I will miss class entirely, a sign will be posted at the classroom indicating your assignment for the next class meeting.

- Electronic Devices

The use of electronic devices (phones, tablets, laptops, cameras, etc.) is permitted when the device is being used in relation to the course's work. All other uses are prohibited in the classroom and devices should be turned off before class starts.

- Academic Honesty and Integrity

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

Students are responsible for understanding the University's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found at

<http://www.newschool.edu/policies/#> Resources regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it can be found on the Learning Center's website: <http://www.newschool.edu/university-learning-center/student-resources/>

The New School views "academic honesty and integrity" as the duty of every member of an academic community to claim authorship for his or her own work and only for that work, and to recognize the contributions of others accurately and completely. This obligation is fundamental to the integrity of intellectual debate, and creative and academic pursuits. Academic honesty and integrity includes accurate use of quotations, as well as appropriate and explicit citation of sources in instances of paraphrasing and describing ideas, or reporting on research findings or any aspect of the work of others (including that of faculty members and other students). Academic dishonesty results from infractions of this "accurate use". The standards of academic honesty and integrity, and citation of sources, apply to all forms of academic work, including submissions of drafts of final papers or projects. All members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the standards of academic honesty and integrity. Please see the complete policy in the Parsons Catalog.

- Intellectual Property Rights: <http://www.newschool.edu/policies/#>