This course focuses on how human-centered design and participatory design methods can be used as approaches to empowerment. Students will gain hands-on experience with conducting user research, synthesizing findings into insights, ideating, sketching, rapid prototyping, and validating concepts with users. Course readings, discussions, and activities will be organized into a user-experience project to help students get out and interact with real users, needs, and challenges.

COURSE MATERIALS

Textbooks:

Additional Materials Needed:
- You are required to purchase a physical sketchbook for the course. Any blank paper (no lines) sketchbook that is 8 x 11 or larger. You want to have enough space. These sketchbooks are great, but feel free to find your own.

COURSE GOALS

- Students will gain familiarity with human-centered design research methods
- Students will learn to generate typical user experience design outputs such as personas, journey maps, storyboards, and wireframes.
- Students will learn to use storyboarding and rapid prototyping software
- Students will submit digital user experience walkthroughs

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE COURSE

First, do the readings! Or tell me why they aren't useful, so I can reconsider their use as part of this course. The readings are there to support the hands-on learning aspect of the course.

There is so much to cover, but the focus was on providing a tight connection between hands-on activities and scholarship/techniques/history around user experience design.
**Second, set aside some time or take the course another time.** The nature of studio courses means you need to actually engage in the design process. It can be challenging to compress a complex process into a semester course, but we try. The result is that you need to set aside time. Put it in your calendar, when you will sit down and do the readings. Look at the schedule of assignments, and set aside time when you will plan things out, and when you will actually implement the plan.

**Third, we are going to be working in groups this semester.** We will set aside time each class to do group check-ins, creating work plans, and tracking our progress (using various techniques from lean, agile, and other philosophies). But at the end of the day, staying on top of your work and contributing positively to your group is CRITICAL to your success in class, but also will be critical for your career (where you will always have to work in groups at some point).

In short, from my experience I can tell you the three things that hamper success in this course is: (i) not doing the readings and therefore not being able to do the assignments, and (ii) not setting aside enough time between classes to do the assignments (these take time to plan out and conduct), and (iii) not being a reliable contributor to your group project work.

**GRADING**

You should think about this course, not as a traditional class, where you sit and listen to lectures and take tests. Instead, this is a studio class where you are expected to **engage and do**. The grades you get are not a reflection on some static knowledge you may or may not have, but whether you **engage**, and whether the things that **you do** show a developing, quality skillset as a designer.

Knowing this, you should also know that sometimes in life we don’t engage fully, and sometimes we do things (especially if we are novices at something) that are not perfect. You’ll also do these things in our class, and your “grades” will reflect our imperfect learning process. So, you should not see your grades as an assessment of you. It’s a feedback mechanism about how you’re engaging and the quality of what you are doing. If you don’t do well one week, ask your professor about what you can do next week to improve. Be ok with making mistakes and getting less than perfect grades. But if you see yourself getting poor assessments for an extended period of time, that’s a signal that you should talk to your professor (me) about what you should change in terms of your process, and how to improve. Keep track of yourself and stay engaged.

Students’ course work will be evaluated as follows:

1. **Engagement (20%)**: Present, and active participation in class discussions, exercises, and group work.
2. **Workbook Exercises (20%)**: Workbook exercises #1, #2, #3
3. **Mini-Assignments (30%)**: x9 mini-assignments
4. **Final Assignment (30%)**: Draft + Revised

**Grade Scale**

The final grade for the course is based on the following percentage scale:

- A (94 or above), A- (90–93)
- B+ (87–89), B (83–86), B- (80–82)
- C+ 77–79, C 73–76, C- 70–72
- D+ 67–69, D 63–66, D- 60–62
- F 59 or below.
All reading assignments should be completed prior to class on the day they are listed. Readings should be completed in full – advanced guidance will be given on specific areas of concentration. The schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor, in response to weather conditions, and/or due to the presence of a guest speaker.

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<th>Session</th>
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ASSIGNMENTS

- Mini-Agignment #1: Problems
- Mini-Agignment #2: Mini-Interview
- Mini-Agignment #3: Interviews
- Mini-Agignment #4: Setup
- Mini-Agignment #5: Map & Reflection
- Mini-Agignment #6: Concepts
- Mini-Agignment #7: Storyboard
- Mini-Agignment #8: Prototype (Draft)
- Mini-Agignment #9: Prototype (Revised)
- Mini-Agignment #10: Learn Interviews
- Final Assignment: Presentation (draft)
- Final Assignment: Presentation
- Workbook Exercises #1
- Workbook Exercises #2
- Workbook Exercises #3

Mini-Agignment #1: Problems
Length: 150-300 words | Graded: Complete/Incomplete

**Do:**
Answer the following questions:
1. Who are some people around you, that you want to/can talk to? Think of 2-3 real people. Who are they, why do you want to talk to them? (50-100 words)
2. What are some problems around you, that interest, concern, or embolden you? What specifically have you observed, experienced or heard? List a minimum of 2-3 problems. (150-200 words)
3. For one problem, who will you talk to, and what do you want to hear about? Why? (150-250 words)

**Submit:**
1. First, create a document in the “Journals” folder. Use the format “firstname_lastname” as the title for the document.
2. Create an entry in your journal with the header, “Mini-Agignment #1: Problems.”
3. In your entry, address the questions above.

Mini-Agignment #2: Mini-Interview
Length: 200-300 words | Graded: 1-5 points

**Do:**
1. Engage in a preliminary interview around a specific problem. Record this interview. It should last at least 15 minutes, but hey, you never know how it’s going to go.
2. Upload the interview to your Fordham Google Drive. Once the file is uploaded, right-click on it and share the file to generate a link. Copy/paste the shareable link, and include this in your entry.

Submit:
1. Create another entry in your journal with the header, “Mini-Assignment #2: Mini-Interview.”
2. Be sure to place the entry at the top of your document, so the last entry is below this new one.
3. In your entry add the following:
   a. Link to an audio recording of your interview(s) (at least 1 interview @ 15 minutes minimum.)
   b. A summary of your interview that includes: (see page 161-163 in UX Story book)
      i. Demographic details and a description of the person
      ii. A log of their actions (where they went, what they did
      iii. Quotes or observation notes that describe their attitudes
      iv. A brief versions of stories you heard
      v. Needs
      vi. Any other specific details you are collecting, such as task success, preference, or other questionnaire data

Mini-Assignment #3: Interviews
Length: 400-500 words | Graded: 1-5 points

Do:
1. Engage in two new interviews around a specific problem (can be same or different than last interview). Record these interviews. Each should last at least 10 minutes.
2. Upload the interviews to your Fordham Google Drive. Once the files are uploaded, right-click on it and share the files to generate links. Copy/paste the shareable links, and include this in your entry.
3. Also for each interview include:
   a. Demographic details and a description of the person
   b. Quotes or observation notes that describe their attitudes
   c. A brief versions of stories you heard
   d. What insights do you see? (specific needs you might be able to address)

Submit:
1. Create another entry in your journal with the header, “Mini-Assignment #2: Mini-Interview.” Be sure to place the entry at the top of your document, so the last entry is below this new one.
2. In your entry add the following:
   a. Link to an audio recording of your interview(s) (at least 1 interview @ 15 minutes minimum.)
   b. A summary of your interview that includes: (see page 161-163 in UX Story book)
      i. Demographic details and a description of the person
      ii. A log of their actions (where they went, what they did
      iii. Quotes or observation notes that describe their attitudes
      iv. A brief versions of stories you heard
      v. Needs
      vi. Any other specific details you are collecting, such as task success, preference, or other questionnaire data

Mini-Assignment #4: Setup
Length: As needed | Graded: Incomplete/Complete

Do:
1. Define challenge (Frame as a big question you want to explore)
2. Define the team roles (who is doing what)
3. Time/space (if needed where/when can the entire group meet)
4. Setup team working space on drive (to share documents/files)
5. Create a slack channel for your team (be sure everyone has installed on their phones)

Mini-Assignment #5: Map & Reflection
Length: As needed | Graded: 1-5 points

Do:
As a team engage in the following:
1. Discuss your challenge, and list the sprint questions.
2. Create a map (use Sprint chapter as a guide)
3. Generate 20 How Might We (HMW) questions, vote, and narrow down to 10.
4. Discuss the target user and target event (get narrow using the map)

Submit:
1. Create another entry in your journal with the header, “Mini-Assignment #5: Map & Reflection.” Be sure to place the entry at the top of your document, so the last entry is below this new one.
2. In your entry add the following:
   a. List your sprint questions. At least three.
   b. Define your map (list of actors on left, ending on right, words in between)
   c. List the teams 10 How Might We (HMW) questions.
   d. Define the target user and target event (use the map).
   e. What do you think about this challenge and the team’s ability to come up with HMW? What were the key obstacles for your team? What is something the team should consider in moving forward with this challenge? (200-300 words)

Mini-Assignment #6: Concepts
Length: As needed | Graded: 1-5 points

Do:
As a team engage in the following:
1. Engage in a lightning demo
2. Engage in the four-step sketch process

Submit:
1. Create another entry in your journal with the header, “Mini-Assignment #6: Concepts.” Be sure to place the entry at the top of your document, so the last entry is below this new one.
2. In your entry add the following:
   a. List of products included in the lightning demo
      i. For each product, 1-2 key big ideas aggregated by the group
   b. Your Crazy 8s sketch (x1) - each group member should have their own sketch
   c. Your solution sketch (x1) - each group member should have their own sketch
      i. For this sketch, write a 50-100 word description of the sketch.

Mini-Assignment #7: Storyboard
Length: As needed | Graded: 1-5 points
Do:
As a team engage in the following:
1. Engage in the five steps of making a decision (art museum, heat map, critique, straw poll, supervote)
   a. Take a picture of your group’s art museum and heat map
2. Create a storyboard for the winning sketch(es). Take your time to revise, and clean it up.
   a. Make sure the prototype can be tested in 15 min or less.

Submit:
1. Create another entry in your journal with the header, “Mini-Assignment #7: Storyboard.” Be sure to place the entry at the top of your document, so the last entry is below this new one.
2. In your entry add the following:
   a. A photo of your art museum and heat map
   b. The winning sketch (max 2; min 1) w/ 50-100 word description of the sketch
   c. A scan/photo of your group’s storyboard

Mini-Assignment #8: Prototype (Draft)
Length: As needed | Graded: 1-5 points

Do:
As a team engage in the following:
1. Pick a tool.
2. Put a prototype together using your tool and storyboard.

Submit:
1. Create another entry in your journal with the header, “Mini-Assignment #8: Prototype (draft).” Be sure to place the entry at the top of your document, so the last entry is below this new one.
2. In your entry add the following:
   a. A link to the prototype (depends on the tool, it might be a script, a series of photos, links, a thing, etc.)

Mini-Assignment #9: Learn Interviews
Length: 150 words | Graded: 1-5 points

Do:
1. Continue to revise the prototype (as needed)
2. Generate your final interview protocol (acts 1-5)
3. Conduct two interviews and video record them. Only two interviews are required from each group.
4. Everyone on the team should view the interviews and generate a list of patterns.

Submit:
1. Upload the video to your YouTube Fordham account, and be sure to set the link to “unlisted.”
2. Post the link to your video in your individual online journal under the header Mini-Assignment #10: Learn Interview. Remember to always post your latest entry at the top.
3. Also include in your entry:
   a. Three or more patterns you’ve identified
   b. Based on your initial sprint questions, and the feedback from the interviews, list three things you want to discuss as a group about the concept and prototype.
Final Assignment: Presentation (draft)
Length: 7-10 minutes | Graded: 1-5 points

Do:
1. Prepare a draft of your final presentation. Be sure your presentation includes:
   a. Problem definition
      i. User story of the problem/challenge
      ii. Significance of the problem (bigger picture)
      iii. Existing behaviors/solutions
   b. Early design
      i. A few storyboards or other ideation materials
      ii. A story of the prototype
   c. Prototype walkthrough
      i. Video or screenshots of prototype
   d. Testing
      i. Video excerpt of the learning interview
   e. Conclusion
      i. What you would have done differently

Submit:
1. Create another entry in your journal with the header, “Final Assignment: Presentation (draft).” Be sure to place the entry at the top of your document, so the last entry is below this new one.
2. In your entry add the following:
   a. A link to a draft of your presentation materials (should be ready to record video)

Final Assignment: Presentation
Length: 7-10 minutes | Graded: 0-100 points

Do
1. Record a video of your final presentation. My recommendation is to use screen capture tools to record someone talking while going through a slide deck.

Submit:
1. Create a video of your presentation. Not all of the group members need to speak on the video, but they should be part of the planning and construction of the video.
2. Upload the video to your YouTube Fordham account, and be sure to set the link to “unlisted.”
3. Post the link to your video in your individual online journal under the header Final Assignment: Presentation. Remember to always post your latest entry at the top.

Workbook Exercises #1
Graded: Complete/Incomplete

Do:
1. Read chapters 1, 2, and 3 of the Workbook: Sketching User Experiences
2. Complete the exercises:
   a. 1.4: 10 Plus 10
   b. 2.1: Scribble Sketch (Methods 1, 2, 3)
   c. 2.2: Photo Sampling (Take a 1 photo, and write a question in regards to it)
   d. 3.2: Sketching what you see
e. 3.3: Sketching Vocabulary (Sketch someone working on a laptop computer)
f. 3.4: Vanilla Sketch
g. 3.7: Sketching with Office Supplies (recreate an interface using paper + post-its)
h. 3.10: Hybrid Sketching (Kitchen/appliance sketch)

Submit:
1. Scans/pictures of all of the exercises completed (8 total).
2. Post all of the scans to your individual online journal under the header Workbook Exercises #1. Remember to always post your latest entry at the top.

Workbook Exercises #2
Graded: Complete/Incomplete

Do:
1. Read chapters 4 and 5 of the Workbook: Sketching User Experiences
2. Focus on your challenges and complete the exercises:
   a. 4.1: Sequential Storyboards
   b. 4.2: State Transition Diagrams
   c. 4.3: Branching Storyboard
   d. 4.4: Narrative Storyboard

Submit:
1. Scans/pictures of all of the exercises completed (4 total).
2. Post all of the scans to your individual online journal under the header Workbook Exercises #2. Remember to always post your latest entry at the top.

Workbook Exercises #3
Graded: Complete/Incomplete

Do:
1. Read chapter 6 of the Workbook: Sketching User Experiences
2. Focus on your challenge and complete the exercises:
   a. 6.1: Uncovering Mental Model
   b. 6.2: Wizard of Oz
   c. 6.3: Think Aloud

Submit:
1. Submit a video of you conducting a think aloud with your wizard of oz prototype.
2. Upload the video to your YouTube Fordham account, and be sure to set the link to “unlisted.”
3. Post the link to your video in your individual online journal under the header Workbook Exercises #3. Remember to always post your latest entry at the top.

POLICIES

Attendance
Repeated, unexcused absences from class will affect your final grade. Missing more than two of our 14 classes will result in a “0” for the “preparation and participation portion of the course grade. (In documented cases of serious illness or emergency, of course, this penalty will be waived.) Consistent tardiness will be treated as unexcused absences. Make-up work will be allowed without penalty for excused absences only. For
unexcused absences, there will be a full letter grade loss on the evaluation of any assignment for each day that it is late. Make-up work will not be accepted one week after the original due date. Consult the Fordham attendance policy for additional details.

Late Submissions
Will not be accepted unless you have pre-arranged an extension at least 48 hours in advance. (Again, in documented cases of serious illness or emergency, of course, this policy will be amended.)

Plagiarism
Not good. Will not be tolerated. It is intellectual theft! A plagiarized assignment or portion of an assignment will result in failing the course. Period. Students should review the Policy on Academic Integrity stated in the 2008-2009 Student Handbook: A University, by its nature, strives to foster and recognize originality of thought. Originality can only be recognized, however, when people acknowledge the sources of ideas or works that are not their own. Therefore, students must maintain the highest standards with regards to honesty, effort and performance. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to: plagiarism, cheating on exams, false authorship, and destruction of library materials needed for a course. This policy gives definitions and instances of violations of academic integrity, the procedures used to arrive at a judgment, possible sanctions, and the process of appeal. Please refer to your Student Handbook for the Policy on Academic Integrity: http://www.fordham.edu/images/student_activities/lc/deanofstudents/graduate%20guide%202009-10.pdf

Students with Disabilities
If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with me immediately or you may go to the Office of Disability Services (Room 402-D McMahon Hall, x6282). Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University.

Please Check your Fordham Email Every Day
Throughout the term, I may send class-wide emails calling your attention to particular articles or asking you to bring in examples.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Writing Center: If you struggle with the writing required in this course, please make use of the Writing Center. For more information about their services see the Writing Center’s website.

Counseling and Psychological Services: We all experience emotional distress and personal difficulties as a normal part of life. As your instructor, I am not qualified to serve as your counselor. However, Fordham’s office for Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) provides free and confidential mental health services that are not connected to your academic record in any way. If you are experiencing mental health distress, I strongly encourage you to take advantage of CPS’ services. For more information about CPS, please visit their website at www.fordham.edu/counseling. To make an appointment, please call 718-817-3725 (RH) or 212-636-6225 (LC).

Academic Coaching: Any student who struggles with time-management and/or organization is invited to one-on-one academic coaching sessions (typically once a week for 45 minutes). Please contact disabilityservices@fordham.edu for more information.