

INLS 718 Grading Contract - Spring 2017

This course is not like other courses you have taken. The course will operate as if we are all working as part of a design and development team for a small company. We will have a client, whose project will be the focus of the work for this course.

The course is as much about practice as it is about theoretical knowledge and we will not privilege one over another. The only way to develop good practice in any applied field is to try and “fail.” Failure is a crucial aspect of succeeding. In this course the only way to properly fail is not to try.

The grading for this course is simple: the more work you complete, the more commits you make on GitHub, the better your grade. If you are ever wondering about how you are doing in the course, just keep track of how much you are doing. As your instructor, I will be.

This doesn't mean that quality is not a consideration, but quality is also something that happens through iteration, not from doing something one time and stopping.

Mandatory Assignments

All mandatory assignments must be completed to assignment specifications to receive a grade in the course. Failure to complete any one of these requirements will result in a failing grade for the semester.

Mid-term conference (15%, 9 March 2017)

You are required to meet with me at the midterm session in your team. In this meeting we will discuss how your team is progressing in your work on the semester-long project and consider things that might need to be improved and address need for additional resources or shifts in focus.

Final reflective essay (10%, due on the day of the exam period, 5 May 2017)

Individually, you will write a brief essay (NO MORE THAN 2000 words/5 pages single-spaced, 12pt, serif-typeface) on design thinking and user experience. There are a number of ways that you can focus this. : 1) How will you incorporate design thinking into your future work?; 2) What is a design problem that you have encountered that you might approach differently after taking this course?; 3) Critique a user experience that has a social impact or that does not act as a social equalizer. Consider ways that you might improve this experience from a design perspective to help remove an instance of structural or systematic inequality created by a designed experience or interaction.

Variable Assignments

Self/peer evaluations (20%, due on the last working day of every month)

At the end of every month, you will be asked to fill out a self and peer evaluation for your team. This is similar to a performance review. These will be submitted through an online interface. Peer evaluations will be anonymized and shared with your team members so that everyone may benefit from praise and suggestions to enhance our collective engagement.

4 evaluations	A	H
3 evaluations	B	P
2 evaluations	C	P
1 evaluation	D	L
0 evaluations	F	F

Design critiques (15%)

These are simply posts to the class blog (which is a running institution from previous iterations of this class) that include a picture, audio, or video recording of an interface, experience, or interaction and a critical assessment, as well as suggestions for improvement. You are expected to engage in this activity over the course of the semester.

10 or more posted	A	H
8-9 posted	B	P
6-7 posted	C	P
5 or fewer posted	D	L
0 posted	F	F

Attendance (20%)

There are approximately 28 sessions in this semester. This is how the attendance grade breaks down. You can't participate if you are not in class. About half of our time spent in class will be hands-on, so it behooves you to take advantage of this time to work with your teams.

25 or more	A	H
24	B	P
23	C	P
22	D	L
21 or fewer	F	F

Commits (20%)

GitHub commits indicate that you are working on and tweaking things of your own accord and as a member of your team. All teams will manage their workflow through GitHub. Since there is no objective standard for how many commits a given person should make, I will evaluate this in terms of the number of commits compared with both that of your group and to the entire class. If your group average is high or low compared with the rest of the class, these will be normalized to develop a metric. This is sort of like "grading on a curve" but slightly more complicated.

Regardless, more commits = more work. If your commit history is blank, then you are not engaged in the workflow. So, commit commit commit.

I have read and understand the above course grading policy and agree to follow it.

Print name _____ Date _____

Signature _____