DMA 141 W25

UI/UX + Web Design
UCLA Dept. of Design Media Arts

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Tuesdays + Thursdays, 2–4:50pm
Broad Art Center, 4240

SUMMARY

In this course, we'll explore thinking, designing, and programming in the browser. We'll consider how the web is a distinct medium for design, similar to how you'd think of a book, a clock, or a chair. But the web also presents its own affordances: interactivity, responsiveness, temporality, accessibility, and the ability to connect across distance and time.

This course is both visual and technical. We'll look at principles of interface and web design, including layout, typography, and interactivity, while also addressing technical skills for implementation through HTML, CSS, and JavaScript. We'll talk about perception and intention, about materials and containers, and about working within a browser.

GOALS

- Understand the web as a medium for design and communication.
- Apply design principles of layout, typography, and composition to create interfaces and websites in the browser.
- Build foundational skills in HTML, CSS, and JavaScript.
- Collect and conceptualize materials for display online.
- Consider how websites are experienced and perceived, and the role of a designer in this process.

PROJECT ABSTRACTS

Project 1: Time

Clocks are all around us, deeply tied to our perception and organization of the world. Even natural phenomena, like the sun's movement or the ocean tides, might be understood as clocks. A clock is a user-interface that creates a user-experience, transforming time into an interpretable form.

In this project, you will conceptualize, design, and implement a clock (or an interface that utilizes or represents time) as a website. You may interpret this broadly—perhaps it is a conventional clock, perhaps not. Consider how the design of the interface, the typography, the colors, the layout—all contribute to the experience. This is an opportunity to explore how interfaces mediate our understanding of time.

Project 2: Place

Websites, like public spaces, are environments—places we visit, navigate, experience, and move through. They provide structure, define atmosphere, and influence movement, guiding how we interact with information, each other, and the world around us.

In this project, you will select a public place—a park, plaza, or artwork—with a Wikipedia entry and use its existing materials as the foundation for a website. You will develop a typographic and design direction that reflects the materials, atmosphere, and history of the place. While your site will include the text and image from the Wikipedia entry, it will also expand beyond this material, integrating a larger image archive and a dynamic element such as weather data, local time, or another piece of information. Consider how websites can both function as extensions of public space and as environments in their own right.

SCHEDULE

Week	**Day**	**Itinerary**
Week 1	January 7	Introductions Syllabus overview Server setup Survey Exercise 1
	January 9	*Class cancelled*
Week 2	January 14 (Remote)	Intro to UI/UX HTML/CSS basics Introduce Project 1: Time Work: Time concepts
	January 16 (Remote)	Review: Time concepts CSS: Positioning Work: Time research & sketches
Week 3	January 21	Review: Time research & sketches Work: Time design
	January 23	CSS: Positioning, Display, Layout CSS: Intro to Flexbox Work: Time design
Week 4	January 28	CSS: Typography Exercise 2 Work: Time design

	January 30	CSS: Interactivity JavaScript: Basics JavaScript: Clock Work: Time implement
Week 5	February 4	Work: Time implement Crits: Time
	February 6	Crits: Time
Week 6	February 11	Introduce Project 2: Place Demo: Responsive Design Work: Place concepts
	February 13	Guest Workshop: Zach Blas Guest Lecture: Laura Coombs Work: Place concepts
Week 7	February 18	Lecture: Typographic directions and implementation Demo: Utilities & Tailwind Work: Place wireframe
	February 20	Lecture: Wireframes Demo: Local development Demo: Meta tags Work: Place wireframe
Week 8	February 25	Demo: Grids & filtering Working groups: Place Work: Place design & implement
	February 27	Demo: Accessibility & alt text Working groups: Place Work: Place design & implement
Week 9	March 4	Working groups: Place Work: Place design & implement
	March 6	Working groups: Place Work: Place design & implement
Week 10	March 11	Crits: Place
	March 13	Crits: Place Wrap-up

PARTICIPATION

Engagement is key to succeeding and getting the most out of this class. Share your ideas, ask questions, and do your best to offer feedback during critiques. Stay curious and open, and be mindful and respectful of everyone’s varying backgrounds and perspectives.

ATTENDANCE

Please email the TA and cc the instructor before class in the event of sickness or an emergency. Absences will typically not be excused after the fact, and more than two unexcused absences will affect your ability to pass the course (as will excessive tardiness). If you miss a class, it is generally your responsibility to catch up on what you missed by consulting with the course materials.

That said, things do happen. Please make an effort to be proactive about reaching out when things come up so we can discuss how you can get caught up and whether exceptions to this policy apply.

GRADING

- Participation: 10%
- Project 1: 40%
- Project 2: 50%

Work will be evaluated primarily on adherence to prompt, concept, overall quality, and implementation.

ORIGINALITY

Writing code is an ongoing process of learning, referencing, and remixing. We'll discuss the bounds of appropriate use, especially around the emergence of LLMs. However, the focus in this course is on creating interfaces and understanding how things work. For that reason, your code should primarily be written by you. When incorporating or remixing code from other sources, you must clearly credit those contributions. Do your best to avoid copying and pasting without taking the time to understand what a particular snippet does.

As outlined in Academic Integrity at MIT: "Writing Code":

> "Writing code is similar to academic writing in that when you use or adapt code developed by someone else as part of your project, you must cite your source. However, instead of quoting or paraphrasing a source, you include an inline comment in the code. These comments not only ensure you are giving proper credit, but help with code understanding and debugging."
>
> "You should not simply re-use code as the solution to an assignment. Like academic writing, your code can incorporate the ideas of others but should reflect your original approach to the problem."

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of California, Los Angeles occupies the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary Lands of the Tongva and Chumash peoples. Our ability to gather and learn here is the result of coercion, dispossession, and colonization. We are grateful for the land itself and the people that have stewarded it through generations. While a land acknowledgement is not enough, it is a first step in the work toward supporting decolonial and indigenous movements for sovereignty and self-determination. Read more about what land we are occupying.

DISABILITY SERVICES

UCLA strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on a disability, please let me know as soon as possible. It is necessary for you to register with the UCLA Center for Accessible Education so that we can establish reasonable accommodations. After registration, make arrangements with me to discuss how to implement these accommodations.

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY AND SAFER SPACES

We understand the classroom as a space for practicing freedom; where one may challenge psychic, social, and cultural borders and create meaningful artistic expressions. To do so we must acknowledge and embrace the different identities and backgrounds we inhabit. This means that we will use preferred pronouns, respect self-identifications, and be mindful of special needs. Disagreement is encouraged and supported, however our differences affect our conceptualization and experience of reality, and it is extremely important to remember that certain gender, race, sex, and class identities are more privileged while others are undermined and marginalized. Consequently, this makes some people feel more protected or vulnerable during debates and discussions. A collaborative effort between the students, TA, and instructor is needed to create a supportive learning environment. While everyone should feel free to experiment creatively and conceptually, if a class member points out that something you have said or shared with the group is offensive, avoid being defensive; instead approach the discussion as a valuable opportunity for us to grow and learn from one another. Alternatively if you feel that something said in discussion or included in a piece of work is harmful, you are encouraged to speak with the instructor or TA. [voidLab / CC SA]