

# GBDA 210: Intro to User Experience

## Course Description and Learning Outcomes

### Course Description

In this course, students will learn the basic principles and practices of user experience design and usability testing. Students will learn how to plan, implement, and interpret usability tests conducted on digital design applications, focusing both on functionality and on the quality of the user's interactions with these technologies.

[Undergraduate Studies Calendar](#)

[Graduate Studies Academic Calendar](#)

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Apply the basic principles of Human-Centered Design
- Demonstrate how the role of the user, their behaviours, perceptions, attitude and expectations affect their interaction with digital devices, software and applications
- Use different prototyping methods, design principles and wireframing tools
- Plan, implement and interpret UX research using a variety of different methodologies
- Conducting a usability test and effectively analyzing the collected data

### Grade Breakdown

The following table represents the grade breakdown of this course.

Activities and Assignments	Weight (%)
----------------------------	------------

Activities and Assignments	Weight (%)
<b>Individual Grade</b>	
Persona	20
Design Studio (x2)	10 (pass/fail)
User Survey	10 (pass/fail)
Your UX Process	30
<b>Team Grade</b>	<b>30</b>
Wireframes	(30)
Prototype	(40)
Presentation	(30)
This accounts for 70% individual and 30% team mark	

If you believe that an error has been made in grading a course requirement, please contact the instructor. Please note that upon appeal, the instructor reserves the right to re-grade any portion of the submitted material. Hence, it is possible that an appeal may result in a lower grade.

## Technology + Communication

For this remote semester, we will be using the following technologies and platforms:

### For Course Content

#### LEARN

- Lecture videos
- Slide decks
- Readings
- Rubrics

- Dropboxes
- Grades

## For Communication

**Coffe + Design** is a space I created specifically for this course on the community platform [Circle.so](#):



### Coffee + Design

- Weekly discussions
- Team collaboration
- Contacting the TAs
- One way to contact the instructor

You will receive an email invitation before the semester begins, but you can also join by clicking [here](#).

## For Office Hours

<https://zoom.us/>

I'd like to call this '**Karin's coffee chats**', a 30-minute **Zoom** meeting for any of you to join taking place every **Friday**. I will run this three times throughout Friday to make sure as many of you as possible can join. We can talk about the weekly asynchronous lecture content, the assigned readings and activities and marked assignments or anything else that might be of interest to the group. This will also be the time when I invite guest speakers from the UX industry to join us. These chats will take place twice during the day to make sure students in different time zones can join:

9:30 - 10 AM EDT

1:30 - 2 PM EDT

The Zoom links can be found on the course homepage on LEARN.

## For Developing our Prototype

<https://www.figma.com/>

You will be guided through the process of how to use Figma, starting in the second part of the course.

## Schedule

### Weekly Class Time

The university has given the guideline that **synchronous (meaning live) learning activities should be organized for no more than one hour a week for 12 weeks of the term.** This means that we cannot deliver live lectures to you. So all learning content; modules, video lectures, activities, will be delivered asynchronously.

To make this remote semester a bit easier for you to navigate, your 2nd-year instructors got together and decided that each one of our course should take place on one particular day, **mainly for synchronous office hours:**

Monday	GBDA 228 - Greg Smith
Tuesday	GBDA 201 - Laura Fong
Wednesday	GBDA 203 - Daniel Harley
Thursday	GBDA 228 - Leah Zhang-Kennedy
<b>Friday</b>	<b>GBDA 210 - Karin</b>

So Friday will be our day together. This doesn't mean you have to go through the weekly content on that day, but it means that I will be fully present to answer any questions you might have. Of course, you can always reach me during the week as well.

## Participation

Without your participation, this course is just me sitting alone at home in front of my computer. And that sounds pretty boring, don't you think? So, I expect you all to actively participate in this course, either (1) during the weekly office hours, (2) on our

**coffee + design** space, (3) via email to the instructor, (4) on social media (#gbdaUX), or in any other way you see fit.

## Materials and Resources

### Required Readings

Required readings will be posted on LEARN each week. Make sure you read the articles and share your thoughts on the **coffee + design** platform with your classmates.

### Recommended Readings

A list of recommended books can be found on the course home page as well as in the 'books for designers' space on **coffee + design**. Students are encouraged to read these books if they wish to further develop their understanding of the topics covered in this course. Please note that this reading list is just a recommendation and students are not obligated to purchase any of these books. But then again, books are great and reading widely will make you a better UX designer.

### Other Materials

Please bring the following to this course:

- A notebook (dot-grid paper if possible)
- A variety of pens, pencils, markers (black and colour)
- Post-it notes in a variety of sizes and colours

### Available University Resources

[Library COVID-19: Updates on library services and operations.](#)

### Work Submission Policy

All work must be submitted to the designated Dropbox by the due date as indicated on the [Class Schedule](#).

## Late Work

Assignments submitted late without approved extensions by the instructor will be subject to late penalties. 5% will be deducted for projects that are handed in within 12 hours after the deadline and an additional 5% per day thereafter (including weekends). After two weeks a grade of 0% will be assigned.

## Student Responsibilities and Rights

Universities recognize that effective education is one that repeatedly challenges the student while providing an opportunity for the student to learn to meet those challenges. We as instructors strive to provide activities and assignments that discriminate among students according to their varying success in learning to meet and overcome respective challenges. This implies that these are integral components of a successful higher education:

1. The amount of material covered in this course will be considerable, and you will not be expected to be able to write down everything that is presented in the modules but instead will have to apply effective and selective note-taking skills
2. The most effective learning takes place through an active and constructive, rather than a passive, process. You are therefore obligated to do more than simply memorize information passed on by the instructor during a video lecture. You must study and apply outside of class in order to fully comprehend the material presented.

---

## Course and Department Policies

### University Policies

*Purpose: for students to understand the University Policies that pertain to them being a student in the course.*

**Academic integrity:** In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.]

**Grievance:** A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4](#). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

**Discipline:** A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#). For typical penalties, check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

**Appeals:** A decision made or penalty imposed under [Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances](#) (other than a petition) or [Policy 71, Student Discipline](#) may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72, Student Appeals](#).

**Note for students with disabilities:** [AccessAbility Services](#), located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

**Turnitin.com:** Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time

assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit alternate assignment.

June 15, 2009 (updated March 2018)

## Coronavirus Information

### Coronavirus Information for Students

This resource provides updated information on COVID-19 and guidance for accommodations due to COVID-19.

## Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system, especially during a remote semester. I am always available for you, for a conversation about the course, your team project or anything else. Check the LEARN homepage of this course for ways to reach me.

The university encourages you to seek out mental health supports when they are needed. Please reach out to [Campus Wellness and Counselling Services](#).

We understand that these circumstances can be troubling, and you may need to speak with someone for emotional support. [Good2Talk](#) is a post-secondary student helpline based in Ontario, Canada that is available to all students.

## Copyright

© Karin Schmidlin and the University of Waterloo.