



Overview

GBDA 301: Global Digital Project I

Fall 2021

University of Waterloo

Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business

Contacts, Meeting Times, and Keeping Track

Contacts

Instructors

- [Scott McManus](#) (Instructor for section 1)
- [Ray Drainville](#) (Course coordinator & instructor for sections 2 & 3)

As the course coordinator, Ray is your first point of contact for any issues pertaining to the course.

TAs

- [Lesi Yang](#)
- [Yueting Zhou](#)

Class Times

The class is divided into three sections, two of which are live (sections 1 & 2), and one for remote learning (section 3).

- **Section 1** (In-person, with Scott): Fridays, 9:00–11:30, DMS 2024
- **Section 2** (In-person, with Ray): Wednesdays, 9:00–11:30, DMS 2024
- **Section 3** (Online, with Ray): Wednesdays, 9:00–11:30

Ray's Wednesday lectures will be both broadcast and recorded, and thus will be available to all students; Scott's Friday section will provide a brief summary of the Wednesday lecture, and afterwards provide you ample opportunity to work on your group projects. Sections 1 & 2 are expected to attend live, as they have been registered to do so. Students are expected to access

lecture materials by the end of the week. See below for more details about participation.

We are using Zoom for remote learning (more info from UW). You should download and install the software (the web interface isn't as good) **All students should get UW Zoom accounts** before the course begins: during lectures, you can interact with one another that way (and get captions for Ray's lectures).

- Please make sure you are logged in with your UW Zoom account (if you haven't done so, get a UW Zoom account with your UW username at uwaterloo.zoom.us)
- Register in advance for the Zoom meeting (one-time only)
- Passcode: 694941

Contingency Plans: What If We Have a Stay-At-Home Order? What if I Contact COVID?

We are well prepared in the event that we would have to return to remote-only delivery, whether on a short-term (i.e. one week) or long-term (i.e., indefinite) period. TL;DR: Since the course is a joint in-person/remote-learning hybrid, we will shift to remote learning as & when we have been instructed to do so.

First: once we have been informed by the University of a stay-at-home order, we will immediately inform you about the switch to remote learning through a LEARN announcement. As for teaching: we will already provide live & recorded lectures online, so will continue with that policy for remote-only teaching. Teams would continue to meet online as before, because many teammates were not attending in-person sessions in the first place.

Students who think they have contacted COVID are instructed to self-isolate and contact Health Services' Testing Centre to book a testing appointment. Positive COVID results should be reported to the University Health Services via their [Health & Advice Form](#). In-person students who contact COVID should—*of course*—not come to class for your isolation period! You will have access to online materials, and can continue with course work remotely. This policy naturally also applies to your instructors: if we come down with COVID, we will isolate. Should this occur, we'll provide information on what will happen with the course through LEARN's "Announcements" tool.

Meetings

Your instructors are available for synchronous (i.e., live) meetings by individual appointment using Microsoft Teams (link to software; [link](#) to the team). Ray is also available in the department in his office (DMS 3014) on Mondays, 10:00–13:00 EST, *or* remotely via MS Teams (remote sessions are available to all: *Ray is very happy to meet with you, so don't feel shy*).

Keeping Track with LEARN

A single-page calendar for the course outlining weekly subjects and deliverable due-dates is [here](#). This is a tentative timeline: the content of the lectures and order may change based on class progress and any changes from our partner. Students will be given reasonable notice of changes.

LEARN's Course Schedule provides reminders for due-dates and a weekly diary. Deliverable dropboxes are placed in chronological order. Dropbox descriptions link to pages with further information where appropriate, as well as links to their respective rubrics. Official notifications (updates, closures, course alterations, etc.) will be displayed in the Announcements section of this LEARN shell. Students are expected to check LEARN frequently.

Course Description

In this course, students will study how digital media projects interact with globalisation, and conversely, how globalisation impacts the use of digital technologies and the development of digital cultures. Students will work in teams to develop a design proposal, prototype, and ancillary explanatory material for a digital media product/service for a non-Canadian community. You will develop proofs of concept, design prototypes, usability tests, and a rudimentary business case. The course thus builds upon lessons learned in other courses to form an integrated whole. The course's project, goals, and iterative approach (all discussed below) will benefit your portfolio and prepare you for real-life working conditions.

Due to the pandemic, GBDA students are still spread across 12 timezones. **Teams must contain at least one member in your project's "target" country, i.e., each team must have a minimum of one overseas student.**

You will develop your project based upon design briefs supplied by our community partner, the Royal Society of Arts (**RSA**) **Student Design Awards**. This is a competition that occurs during the Winter term that challenges emerging designers to tackle real-world social, economic, and environmental issues. If your course project is successful, you should strongly consider submitting your work to the competition. Previous students have been finalists and winners, so GBDA has a good track record.

The RSA is [an ancient institution with a venerable history](#). They offer nine different briefs (NB: the ninth is *not* appropriate for the course, and therefore is *not* an option for your project) from which you may choose—previous winners may be viewed [here](#). The deliverables for this will be judged against the RSA's judgment criteria (see [here](#) for more detail):

1. **Social and environmental impact.** How does your design benefit society and the environment?
2. **Research and insights.** How did you investigate this issue? What were your key insights? This includes primary & secondary research.
3. **Systems thinking.** How did your research and insights inform your solution? How did you develop, test, iterate and refine your concept? Demonstrate the evolution of your solution from conception to conclusion.
4. **Viability.** How does your solution make sense from a financial point of view? What is the competitive environment your solution would sit within?
5. **Creativity and innovation.** We are looking for a design that is pleasing and looks and feels

well resolved.

6. **Magic (unofficial).** We and the RSA are looking for a bit of "magic"—a surprising or lateral design solution that delights.

Course Goals & Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Conceptualise a generative design by

- Identifying & addressing user needs
- Differentiating a design from pre-existing models
- Conducting relevant, credible market and user research
- Communicating in both writing and oral presentation the values, meaning and social implications of your work

2. Prototype effectively by

- Adapting to variable platforms (low- and high-fidelity)
- Creating prototypes that effectively address user needs

3. Iterate designs effectively by

- Seeking, listening, and rapidly responding to user feedback in a professional manner
- Conducting and reporting relevant, credible usability testing
- Pivoting on and integrating feedback in meaningful prototype revisions
- Providing effective and actionable feedback on designs

4. Manage a project effectively by

- Facilitating positive and productive team communication
- Effectively scoping projects
- Making the most efficient use of limited material resources
- Consistently meeting hard-stop deadlines

5. Plan a credible business strategy by

- Conducting relevant market research
- Creating creative briefs and prototypes that effectively communicate a design concept
- Communicating a confident, polished, convincing pitch in an oral presentation, accompanied by visual media
- Provide polished supporting documents and prototypes to stakeholders

6. Develop team assessment, self-assessment and reflexivity skills by

- Evaluating own and team-members' performance and set structured and measurable goals for improvement

- Scoping, committing to, and delivering on one's individualized commitments to the project
- Applying & deepening skills learned in previous GBDA courses to novel contexts
- Acquiring new skills via self-directed learning
- Learning and habitually apply project management and team communication tools

Faster Iteration via the "Sprint" Method

Students will iterate their products in an agile manner, organised around multiple "design sprints".

The sprint themes are:

1. Understand
2. Diverge
3. Decide
4. Prototype
5. Validate

The sprint model is useful for the rapid development of business plans, product features, user interview questions, and addressing issues that arise from testing. Gaining experience with agile development will benefit your future careers.

Deliverables

The course is divided into RSA components and GBDA components. **All projects are due at 18:00 (EST) on the day in question. Most are due on Tuesdays, but please note some are due on Fridays.** Deliverable due-dates are available on the [course calendar](#), are outlined below, and are placed in their respective deliverable info pages.

For this course, students will predominantly be assessed on the technical quality of the content they produce, the growth and iteration of the project along the way, the consideration of cultural and contextual suitability, and the creative and critical thinking skills each team employs. Many smaller assignments are structured to set deadlines, provide early feedback, pinpoint any problem areas and keep things on schedule.

Team Formation (group components)

Form your teams & give your team a SFW name; decide your roles & how you'll work; create a contract. Take this seriously, as you'll be held to your decisions. Teams that do not supply these materials cannot proceed in the course. Team list work 1% of your mark; Team Charter worth 1% of your mark; Team Working Agreement worth 1.5% of your mark.

Due: Friday, 17 September (More info | dropboxes for [Team Members](#) | [Working Agreement | Charter](#))

TCPS2 Accreditation (individual component)

Individuals are required to go through the TCPS2 process, a course in ethics in research training. [This UW page](#) has a link to the training course, along with information for getting your certificate.

You are required to upload your certificate: students who do not do so cannot proceed in the course.

Due: Tuesday, 5 October, but get this completed ASAP ([More info](#) | [dropbox](#))

Idea Proposal (group component)

Propose via a brief, two-minute video, a viable digital project based upon one of the RSA's briefs. Worth 1.5% of your mark.

Due: Tuesday, 28 September ([More info](#) re: RSA briefs | [dropbox](#))

Hero image (group component)

This is a singular 'poster image' that conveys the essence of your project, plus 1 sentence strapline or description. Worth 5% of your mark.

Due: Tuesday, 19 October ([More info](#) | [rubric](#) | [dropbox](#))

Big Idea Summary (group component)

What is it? This is a single A3 PDF page describing your 'Big Idea' in less than 250 words. This should clearly explain what your solution is, the specific area of need it addresses, and how you arrived at the solution. Worth 5% of your mark.

Due: Tuesday, 19 October ([More info](#) | [rubric](#) | [dropbox](#))

Proposal Boards (group component)

What is it? These are 4 A3 PDF pages describing your proposal and demonstrating that you have met the RSA's 6 judging criteria. Worth 10% of your mark.

Due: Tuesday, 16 November ([More info](#) | [rubric](#) | [dropbox](#))

Prototype (group component)

What is it? This is a fully functioning and interactive prototype of your digital project. Students will provide a link to an online platform (e.g., Figma, Adobe XD) so we can judge interactivity, but must also upload the files to the dropbox. Worth 20% of your mark.

Due: Tuesday, 7 December. ([More info](#) | [rubric](#) | [dropbox](#))

Final presentations (group component)

What is it? The final summative video presentation explaining and showcasing your project. Worth 10% of your mark.

Due Tuesday, 7 December.

([More info](#) | [rubric](#) | [dropbox](#))

Peer Reviews (individual component)

What are they? Peer reviews ([template](#)), submitted four times during the course Total worth 20% of mark.

Due: 5 October, 2 November, 23 November, and 7 December ([More info](#) | [rubric](#) | [dropboxes](#) for

Participation (individual component)

- **What is it?** Meaningful and timely attention paid both to course material and the production of your work, both individually and in teams (see below or view more info). Worth 24% of your mark.
- **Requirements:** Access the lectures by the end of the week, take the projects seriously, and submit your work on time
- **Due:** Throughout the course, compiled by the instructors and/or TAs through data analytics

Students will usually receive a group mark for group assignments. The individual grade is heavily derived from the peer reviews, so working well with a team and carrying the weight of the project equally (and avoiding either under-contributing or over-contributing) is essential if students want to do well in the course. The instructors reserve the right to adjust the final grade for over- or underperforming students.

Textbook, Required Readings, and Software

Students are expected to obtain a copy of the following book, which is very helpful for considering the creation of cross-cultural products:

Akpem, Senongo (2020), *Cross-Cultural Design*. (New York: A Book Apart). ISBN: 978-1-937557-87-4. You can buy it at A Book Apart's online shop. When checking out, please use the code "STRATFORD15" to get a 15% discount off of the already low price.

Students are expected to have access to their own software (kept up-to-date and in working order) in order to design & develop their deliverables. Adobe CS is the industry standard, and a subscription is available at a substantial discount from the W Store. Serif's Affinity Studio is a good, low-cost alternative. Other potentially-relevant software is Figma and Miro.

Assessment

What does my grade mean?

- **A+ (90–100):** This mark is for deeply exceptional work that demonstrates profound understanding of the issues presented in class. It indicates work that is *well above average* for GBDA students. The work demonstrates a professional level of involvement and execution on the part of the student, and stands on its own terms outside of the context of a school assignment.
- **A (80-89):** This mark is for exceptional work that, to varying degrees, demonstrates a thorough understanding of the issues presented in class. It indicates work that is *above average* for GBDA students. The work demonstrates a deep involvement on the part of the student, and could stand on its own terms outside of the context of a school assignment.
- **B (70-79):** This mark is for notable work that, to varying degrees, shows that the student has understood the topic and has made every effort to fulfil the requirements of the

assignment to the best of his or her ability. It indicates work of *the expected quality* for GBDA students, and represents good work.

- **C (60- 69):** This mark is for satisfactory/acceptable work, to varying degrees: for example, it may be successful on one level, but fails on another. Alternately, the work may reflect a good deal of effort, but it does not adequately address the topic at hand. It is *not quite up to GBDA standards*, but not that far away, either. After having followed recommendations by the lecturer, future work should do meet GBDA standards.
- **D (50-59):** This mark is for barely adequate work, to varying degrees: the work displays minimal effort and commitment on the part of the student and/or does not convey a sufficient understanding of the topic at hand. It is *below GBDA standards*, and significantly more effort would be required to meet those standards.
- **F (33-49):** This mark is for insufficient or incomplete work, to varying degrees, and is marked as a fail. It indicates work that is *well below GBDA standards*, and future work would require substantial effort to meet standards.

Attendance Participation

This is a project-based course. There are no term papers or examinations. During the pandemic, GBDA students are scattered across at least 12 time zones. According to the University's remote-teaching guidelines, we do not schedule *required*, live (i.e., synchronous) lectures. However, we will schedule live classes: details are at the beginning of this document. The lectures will be recorded for students who cannot attend live. Whether you attend in person, attend the live session on Zoom, watch the recorded version on LEARN or YouTube, or download the PDF notes, **students are expected to access lecture materials by the end of the week**. Instructors will offer live drop-in sessions for students; these will be optional.

Because we are learning remotely *and* in person, our focus is not on attendance, but **participation**. That is, we mark meaningful and timely attention paid both to course material and the production of your work, both individually and in groups. The **TL;DR version** is: access the lectures, access them on time, take your position in your team seriously, attend closely to deliverable requirements, and submit your work on time. Participation takes up 30% of your final mark. If you don't take the materials or assignments seriously, you will get, at best, only a portion of that percentage.

Late Work

These assignments reflect real-world production: deadlines matter. Assignments submitted late without approved extensions will be subject to late penalties of 5% for the first 24 hours that the work is late, rising to 10% for each subsequent day. After a week, a mark of 0% will be assigned for the late work. Late penalties are not recoverable. **If there are important circumstances that impact your submissions, tell us *before* the submission of the work, not afterwards.** Of course medical issues may impact deliverables, and we will accommodate this, but in keeping with University guidelines, you need to provide documentation.

Submission of Work

Follow the directives provided on your project outlines. Submit your files to the appropriate dropbox in LEARN in the appropriate format(s) and with the name specified. When in doubt, label all files **GBDA301_teamName_deliverableName** (group components) or **GBDA301_lastname_firstname_deliverableName**. (individual components)

Legalities

Information on Plagiarism Detection

Students and faculty at the University of Waterloo share an important responsibility to maintain the integrity of the teaching and learning relationship. This relationship is characterized by honesty, fairness, and mutual respect for the aim and principles of the pursuit of education. Academic misconduct impedes the activities of the university community and is punishable by appropriate disciplinary action.

We reserve the right to use electronic means to detect and help prevent plagiarism. Students agree that by taking this course all assignments are subject to submission via software for textual similarity (e.g., Turnitin.com or Grammarly) or visual similarity (e.g., Google Reverse Image Search). Assignments submitted to Turnitin.com will be included as source documents in Turnitin.com's restricted access database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in such documents for five academic years. The instructors may require students to submit their assignments electronically to Turnitin.com or the instructor may submit questionable text on behalf of a student.

Please take note of the following: As a studio-based course all work submitted for evaluation must be your own, made from scratch. *Using templates, stock sources, or any online imagery is not permitted unless expressly authorised by the instructor.* If the submitted work is determined not to be your own, the Academic Discipline Procedure of [Policy 71 \(Student Discipline\)](#) will be invoked.

Copyright-Free & Creative Commons Resources

You can avoid plagiarism by using specially-licensed resources—provided you cite them, of course. Works may be available in the public domain that are identified as copyright-free or that fall under licenses from Creative Commons. "Public domain" is a term used for works that are not protected by copyright law. If an image is in the public domain, then you are allowed to use it—to copy it, to manipulate it and to distribute it. Works identified as Creative Commons allow varying degrees of use. In this case, the authors decide how you can use their images.

- [CARFAC](#) (Canadian Artists Representation / Le front des artistes canadiens)
- [Wikimedia Commons](#), Google Images, and [Flickr](#) have databases of digital files that are available for use. You need to check the conditions of use as they vary: restrict your searches to files that are tagged as available for reuse.
- The [Copyright Act in Canada](#) was recently amended to reflect the current digital landscape.
- The following [conversation](#) on the US-based Copyright Advisory Network answers some of

the basics related to US Copyright, images and fair use.

- This [document from Cornell University](#) defines works in the public domain for United States as of January 1, 2013.

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. See the UWaterloo [Academic Integrity](#) Webpage and the [Arts Academic Integrity Office](#) Webpage 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 academic offenses and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offense, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offenses (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offenses 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 \(Student Petitions and Grievance\)](#)—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 \(Student Appeals\)](#).

Notes for Students with Disabilities

The Office for Persons with Disabilities (OPD), Accessibility Services is located in Needles Hall, Room 1132. OPD 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 the OPD at the beginning of each academic term](#). We're happy to accommodate your needs, but to ensure equity, we need guidance & authorisation from the OPD to do so.

A Note about Fees!

This is a friendly reminder that you won't gain access to the online learning systems (LEARN) until your Registered Status on Quest for the term is "Fees Arranged." Visit the Finance-Student Accounts website to find out how to become "Fees Arranged" for the term. If you submitted a payment or Promissory Note more than three days ago and you're not yet "Fees Arranged", please contact Student Accounts immediately to investigate: (519) 888-4567 extension 38466, sfacnts@uwaterloo.ca. Do not go to Needles Hall, as in-person finance operations are suspended throughout the pandemic. Finance personnel are available between 8:30 & 4:30 weekdays.

Did you get this far? If so, show it by posting a favourite meme in the [#random channel](#) ;)