Course Home   Content   Grades   Connect ⌄   Submit ⌄   Resources ⌄   Reports   Course Admin   Help

Overview

Course Overview: GBDA 401: Cross-Cultural Digital Business I

University of Waterloo

Stratford School of Interaction Design and Business

Fall 2020

NB: There are *no* **in-person classes in Fall 2020** because of social-distancing requirements arising from the COVID-19 pandemic**. GBDA 401 is conducted entirely online**. We aim to **release UX Design lectures on Tuesdays, UX Research lectures on Wednesdays**, and **Business lectures on Thursdays**. You are expected to be **working on your projects on Fridays**.

Contacts

Business: Vivian Yang
UX Design: Jourdan Bousfield
UX Research: Ray Drainville

NB: Ray is the course coordinator, and is therefore your first point-of-contact for anything related to this course. There are *no* in-person office hours. Office hours will be conducted online, and instructors will provide you with meeting options upon request.

Course Description

In this course students will engage in advanced study of how to adapt digital products and services to suit specific cultures or communities. You will develop proofs of concept; design prototypes; usability tests, and a business case while working with global businesses, consultants, and a community partner.

Our community partner for Fall 2020 is the **Royal Society of Arts (RSA) Student Design Awards** (more info), a competition that challenges emerging designers to tackle real-world social, economic, and environmental issues.

This course is made up of three equal parts: **Business**, **UX Design**, and **UX Research** and is being taught by three instructors with expertise in these areas. The term is organized around **6 design sprints of two weeks each**. The sprint themes are:

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

At the end of sprints 1–5, every two weeks, teams present their findings in a video pitch and receive feedback from the instructors.

Course goals and learning outcomes

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

1. Conceptualise a generative design by

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

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

4. Manage a project effectively by

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

5. Plan and execute a viable business strategy by

- Conducting relevant market research
- Accurately assessing resource needs

- 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 performance and set structured and measurable goals for improvement
- Assessing the strengths of one's team members and provide actionable feedback for improvement
- Scoping, committing to, and delivering on one's individualized commitments to the project
- Applying 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 tool

Course requirements, deliverables, and assessment

For this course, students will predominantly be assessed on the technical quality of the content they produce, its growth and iteration 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.

Hero image

- **What is it?** A singular 'poster image' that conveys the essence of your project, plus 1 sentence strapline or description. This is a group component.
- **Specs:** A3 PDF image
- **Due:** 9 October (dropbox)
- **Value:** 5% of mark (rubric)

Big Idea Summary

- **What is it?** 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. This is a group component.
- **Specs:** A3 PDF problem (50 words); Process (75); Proposal (50)
- **Due:** 9 October (dropbox)
- **Value**: 5% of mark (rubric)

Your Proposal

- **What is it?** 4 pages describing your proposal and demonstrating that you have met the 6 judging criteria. This is a group component.
- **Specs**: 4 x A3 PDF boards. Each board should include a heading. Number each board in the top right-hand corner, in the order they should be viewed by the judges
- **Due**: 13 November (dropbox)

- **Value:** 10% of mark (rubric)

Business Model Canvas

- **What is it?** A fully-fleshed out canvas with additional text (50 words max.) for each section. This is a group component.
- **Specs:** Business model canvas
- **Due:** 27 November (dropbox)
- **Value:** 10% of mark (rubric)

Prototype

- **What is it?** A fully functioning and interactive prototype of your project. This is a group component.
- **Specs:** Varying depending upon what you decide to create. Possible technologies: InVision, Figma, 3D printing, website, etc.
- **Due:** 7 December (dropbox)
- **Value:** 20% of mark (rubric)

360-Degree Reviews

- **What are they?** Peer reviews (template), submitted four times during the course. This is an individual component.
- **Due:** 18 September (dropbox); 2 October (dropbox); 6 November (dropbox); 7 December (dropbox)
- **Value:** 5% apiece, or 20% in total (rubric)

Sprint video presentations

- **What are they?** Short video presentations (approx. 2 minutes) summarising your findings during that sprint. They are due approximately every two weeks, and you will submit five videos during the course. This is a group component.
- **Due:** 18 September (dropbox); 2 October (dropbox); 23 October (dropbox); 6 November (dropbox); 20 November (dropbox)
- **Value:** 4% apiece, or 20% in total (rubric for sprint 1; rubric for sprints 2-5)

Students will usually receive a group mark for group assignments. The individual grade is heavily derived from the 360-degree peer evaluations, 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.

RSA Student Design Competition Submission

The submission to the RSA Student Design Award will be checked against a checklist of submission requirements (see table above). Before the submission, it is important to be aware of the judging criteria of the award, which are:

1. **Social and environmental benefit**. How does your design benefit society and the environment?

2. **Research and insights**. How did you investigate this issue? What were your key insights?
3. **Design thinking**. How did your research and insights inform your solution? How did you develop, test, iterate and refine your concept? Demonstrate the journey you've been through to the end result.
4. **Commercial awareness**. Hoes your journey make sense from a financial point of view? What is the competitive environment your solution would sit within?
5. **Execution**. We are looking for a design that is pleasing and looks and feels well resolved.
6. **Magic**. We and the RSA are looking for a bit of "magic"—a surprising or lateral design solution that delights.

~~Attendance~~ Presence

Because we want to make access equitable to our students, who are located around the globe and have varying qualities of internet access, **there are no required synchronous (i.e., live) events**. **Any live events will be recorded and made available** to students who cannot participate.

However, this course requires full engagement on the class project. Given this requirement and the above concerns, we cannot demand *attendance* in the traditional way. Accordingly, we will shift to recording *presence*. Your presence in remote work is based upon two factors:

1. Continuous, meaningful communication with your teammates and classmates, and your ability to contribute to assignments in a timely fashion.
2. Communication with your instructors. Again, this must be meaningful. We're here to advise you and help improve your ideas, so don't wait until a deadline: speak with us more frequently.

We will be setting up a **Slack group**, the address for which will be https://gbda401-2020.slack.com. Each team will receive access to their unique #channel that needs to be used as the main team communications tool. All instructors and TAs have access to all channels and can easily be reached for quick questions. You will be expected to communicate with your teammates and other classmates in Slack. Your presence will be counted for your meaningful, timely contributions and your communication with one another and with your instructors. You will be required to personalise your Slack avatar with your name and a photograph of you.

If a student goes "missing" for a sprint (approximately a 2-week period) without instructors' previous approval, they will automatically be pulled from the team and continue the project as an individual study. Any research or other work done up to that date by the team can be used by the individual student, but from that point onward, the student will work alone. The same deliverables as stated above are expected to be completed by the student who has left the group. Any student faced with this situation will be unable to participate in 360-degree peer evaluations, and may forfeit grades at the discretion of the instructors.

Course outline

The course outline can be found here. The class is taught in six 2-week design sprints:

1. **Understand:** 9 September–18 September (i.e., weeks 1 and 2)

2. **Define:** 22 September–2 October (i.e., weeks 3 and 4)
3. **Diverge:** 6 October–23 October (i.e., weeks 5 and 6, with Reading Week interrupting)
4. **Decide:** 27 October–6 November (i.e., weeks 7 and 8)
5. **Prototype:** 10 November–20 November (i.e., weeks 9 and 10)
6. **Validate:** 24 November–4 December (i.e., weeks 11 and 12)

   Final deadlines are on Monday, 7 December.

Instructors will teach topics that they have the most expertise in with each one covering one day a week. The topic of the lectures may change due to class ability, interest, and progress. Remember, sessions are divided into **UX Design**, **Business**, and **UX Research** sections. **We aim to release UX Design lectures on Tuesdays, UX Research lectures on Wednesdays, and Business lectures on Thursdays. You are expected to be working on your projects on Fridays**.

Weekly subjects and deadlines can be difficult to remember. We've organised three ways for you to access them. **Subjects and deadlines can be seen in a term overview in the** Course Outline. (see Content > "Resources"). You can **also see subjects and deadlines in a calendar view**, (available on the Home page > "Calendar"). It is **also viewable week-by-week in the Course Schedule** (available Content > Course Schedule; also see widgets on the Home page for upcoming lectures and due-dates). You are strongly encouraged to consult them. You will receive reminders of upcoming deadlines approximately four days before they are due. All official announcements will be posted on LEARN by the course coordinator.

Work submission policies

With the exception of physical prototypes, all work must but be submitted to the designated Dropbox on LEARN by the posted deadline. Submissions must be in the appropriate file format (most usually PDF)—no native files, please. At the end of each sprint, you must submit and leave all physical prototypes for evaluation.

Late work

Assignments submitted late without approved extensions will be subject to late penalties. 5% will be deducted for projects that are handed in within 24 hours after the deadline and an additional 10% per day thereafter (including weekends) up to a maximum of 50%. After that time a grade of 0% will be assigned for the late work. Late penalties are not recoverable.

Deadlines

Assignments are due by the date given in the schedule at the time of day specified. Extensions to assignment deadlines will be granted only in cases of illness or emergency. Extensions are granted based on the discretion of the instructors. Students should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible to make their requests and provide credible documentation (such as a doctor's note or a Verification of Illness Form).

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 for textual similarity review by software (e.g., Turnitin.com or Grammarly). 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.

Helpful links

A note on copyright free and Creative Commons: Resources are 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 artists 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).

Note 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.

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