

## Experience Design Studio Course Syllabus

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### Course Summary:

This course is designed to teach both graduate and undergraduate design and business students, either separately or together, the principles of sustainable product and service development. It has been taught successfully at the graduate level in the following programs:

- **MBA in Design Strategy**, California College of the Arts, San Francisco, CA, [www.designmba.org](http://www.designmba.org)

This syllabus is designed to be a complete teaching module for instructors and includes the following pieces:

Syllabus and teaching materials: [www.nathan.com/thoughts/ES](http://www.nathan.com/thoughts/ES)

- Syllabus (in PDF and Word)
- Experience Dimensions and Meaning Presentation (in PDF and PowerPoint)
- Stakeholder, Design, and User Research Techniques Presentation (in PDF and PowerPoint)
- Interaction Design Presentation (in PDF and PowerPoint)
- Information Design Presentation (in PDF and PowerPoint)
- Service Design Presentation (in PDF and PowerPoint)
- Stakeholder Presentation Evaluation Criteria (in PDF and Word)
- Final Project Presentation Evaluation Criteria (in PDF and Word)
- Project Team Survey (in PDF and Word)

### Instructor Notes:

To use this course, simply delete the preface pages (with text in purple), make any modifications you would like to the course syllabus, add weekly due dates for the semester taught, fill-in the contact information for the instructors, and print or save to distribute to students.

This course has been structured for a 15-week semester studio course. You will likely need to modify to meet the needs of your schedule, including dates and holidays. It has been successfully taught in 5-day residency programs as well as 15-week programs. If the projects you give your students don't require 12-weeks of development (for example, a packaging or graphic design projects, as opposed to a product or architecture project, feel free to shorten assignments and modify as necessary.

This course has been developed to be transdisciplinary and recognize no boundaries between various design disciplines. As such, it can be used in a variety of design programs, such as:

graphic/visual/communications, industrial/product, fashion, interior, automotive/transportation, and packaging design as well as architecture. It has been developed at the graduate level for masters programs but can just as easily be used in an undergraduate program. It also values equally the creation of products as well as services and environments. Feel free to tailor the project requirements to suit the needs of your course and program. However, if your program doesn't support many opportunities for your students to consider different types of solutions across this spectrum, may we suggest that this course on sustainability would give them a natural and appropriate opportunity to do so.

It is a good idea to set-up a course-wide online discussion mailing list via email or through a service such as Google Groups. This will allow students to discuss the material as well as post news relevant to Experience Design they find during the course semester.

This course is designed around accreditation criteria like those required by WASC (the Western Association of Schools and Colleges). If your school uses learning objectives to track student progress and measure student learning, this section will be useful to (and provide "evidence" for) your program administrators and those in your school in charge of accreditation.

A note about guest speakers: it's not always possible to get nationally-known leaders to speak to students, either because of time or location constraints. Sometimes, it's possible to engage guest speakers online, using teleconferencing, chat, or other distance learning technologies. Skype, for example, can be useful for knowledgeable and experienced professionals to engage in a two-way conversation with students.

For critiques, guests need to be physically present for presentations and feedback. Online technologies are two problematic and have too narrow a scope for adequate feedback.

## Experience Design Studio Course Syllabus

Instructor: <your name here>

Email: <your email address here>

Phone: <your phone number here>

### Course Description:

Experience Design is a contemporary approach to design that recognizes that no matter what we create (product, service, event, or environment), there is always an experience created that surrounds it. As a result, whether we intend to or not, our creations impact our customers, audiences, and users in ways usually not acknowledged or addressed. There are, at least, six dimensions of design:

- Intensity
- Breadth
- Duration
- Interaction
- Triggers
- Significance

This represents opportunity for better performing and more pleasing designs and solutions than what has come before. In addition, this model crosses all design disciplines (graphic/visual/communications, packaging, industrial/product, fashion, interior, automotive/transportation, media strategy, architecture, etc.).

This course orients students to the full spectrum of human experience dimensions as well as the five major senses. It introduces tools for students of all kinds (graduate and undergraduate) to use to better understand the context of their challenges and create more meaningful solutions. The course is organized around a single, 16-week team project that encapsulates and stimulates this learning through exploring and prototyping.

Design processes and techniques will be studied in readings as well as put into practice in projects throughout the course. Students will be required to present articulate design concepts verbally as well as visually at a professional level in an open class critique format. A final presentation will be made representing a high level of professional finish, including but not limited to drawings, marketing materials, sketch models, and finished models.

All interactions with products, services, and events are experiences. These experiences occur, whether or not they are designed, and often do not have the effects their creators might intend. What are the mechanical and aesthetic components of products and services and what do they mean for value? How

can organizations consciously create successful experiences for their customers and other stakeholders? What innovation processes work appropriately for what kinds of organizations?

Design has a long history of sustainability and social justice. While this class is not focused on social, environmental, and financial sustainability, any design project should always reflect these requirements regardless. A solution that is not respectful of people, the planet, or cannot afford to continue financially, is not an acceptable solution. For a curriculum on this topic, specifically, try the *Design is the Problem* curriculum available here: [www.nathan.com/thoughts/DITP](http://www.nathan.com/thoughts/DITP)

## **Course Objectives, Core Competencies, and Learning Outcomes:**

This class will be divided into four main sections:

1. Context – Understanding and reviewing the value and importance of experience and senses as it relates to business and the larger cultural agenda.
2. Observation – Researching existing companies, systems, infrastructures, and events. Field notes and real time observation gathering data as it happens.
3. Development – Creating an experiential solution (either product, service, event, or environment) which functions within the audience context as well as the market and other forces within a system.
4. Reflection – Evaluation of projects based on market conditions and outside events, including innovation and development processes.

Along with the course project, students in the this studio will explore, through readings, discussion, guest lectures, and assignments, the processes and strategies for creating extraordinary experiences. The course project can be either an individual or team project.

### **Objectives**

- To instill the primary concepts and theories underlying the creative process in products and services, and to deliver practical, effective tools for applying design concepts and theories to the development of products and services.
- To integrate and reinforce the core competencies, intuitions, and general trend observations students already have into sound design concepts.
- To teach a flexible but reliable process of inquiry that enables students to engage in continual learning and adjustment in the face of changing business environments.
- To support and implement creativity and innovation in an effective team context and build the confidence to present ideas professionally.
- To deepen understanding about experiences and the human senses to more effectively develop solutions that trigger these sensations.
- To demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate through oral and written media, as demonstrated by coursework, online engagement, papers and presentations.
- To produce a group project that demonstrates knowledge, experience, and originality in a student's portfolio.

### **Learning Outcomes**

## **Primary Learning Objectives:**

### **Critical Analysis Skills**

Students will learn to analyze products from a variety of trend and business criteria and attain a beginning level of familiarity with the sales and marketing contexts that are pertinent to their design applications. Students are required to perform deep analysis of project context, customer needs, competitive landscape, and are critiqued on the quality of their solutions to address these issues. Students demonstrate an ability to integrate multiple, competing issues while developing a unique, creative solution that balances many factors. Students demonstrate an ability to intelligently describe these challenges and how their solutions address them.

### **Interdisciplinary Methods**

Students will use a variety of processes from several disciplines (including product design, communications, management fundamentals, materials engineering, and financial and social assessment frameworks) to develop real world solutions. Readings build on varied student experience to describe and use multi-disciplinary perspectives in development process. These are evaluated with feedback and graded throughout class. Students develop a plan that reflects the many disciplines required to develop a solution, including marketing, engineering, customer service, leadership, clients, and customer contact.

### **Professional Development Methods**

Students will develop professional communication and group management skills within the context of two team projects. All students will take part in preparing reports and other deliverables to a professional level, participate in all presentations (even for group projects), and cultivate a high level of presentation confidence. Students will receive feedback on their presentation skills as well as the content of their presentations.

### **Research Skills**

Class projects will require innovative research skills to find and develop new solutions. These skills will apply to customers and markets as well as materials, manufacturing, and product life-cycle data. 2 project challenges require customer and market research, competitive analysis, and economic impact report. These are evaluated by professors and external critiquers, with feedback, in presentations and reports, and graded. Students demonstrate an ability to research customer needs and desires while making clear their own biases beforehand and demonstrating how they overcome these biases in their research.

### **Collaboration Skills**

Most of the projects in this class will be team-based, requiring extensive interaction in accommodating various personality differences and managing the range of creative confidences. Additionally, students may be exposed to individuals from various companies and organizations, in which they will have to interact diplomatically and effectively. Team assessments will be used to quantify and qualify team issues throughout the class. Emphasis will be placed on team interaction and individual contribution over the final project solutions themselves. Two team projects requiring shared deliverables and high-performance interaction. Students demonstrate the use of collaborative language and actions in meeting deadlines and contribute to all aspects of each deliverable. Students rate each others' performance after each project.

### **Discipline-Specific Techniques Skills**

Readings, projects, reports, and feedback focuses on design and development processes, service design, experience design, and form development in the context of innovation. Students demonstrate understanding for process steps and order by documenting complete and detailed actions in their reports.

#### **Understanding: Visual Literacy**

Team projects and weekly design assignments require students to sketch and prototype rapidly. These are graded weekly. Students demonstrate courage in using a variety of visual media, despite lack of experience (in many cases). Students show improvement in sketching and rendering skills throughout the semester.

#### **Meaning and Value Creation Understanding**

Project solutions will be judged not only on their market and business validity but also on their value, innovation, and meaning to their intended customers and audiences. Introduction to meaning tools, evaluation and grading of these in project development and reports. Students adequately create Meaning strategies and demonstrate understanding of these strategies in the design choices they make (triggers) within their projects.

#### **Creativity and Critical Thinking Skills**

All of the projects in this class will require innovative and dynamic problem solving initiatives. Project outcomes must demonstrate confident approaches with relevant and thought provoking solutions. Regular evaluation and critique (by professor and external guests) of original, creative solutions to project challenges. Written and oral feedback. Students are critiqued on the originality and creativity of their proposed solutions, their progress throughout the course in developing and iterating prototypes, and their ability to reflect on critique deeply.

#### **Secondary Learning Objectives:**

##### **Oral Communication Skills**

Through two graded & critiqued presentations, students' abilities are evaluated in clearly and concisely prioritize their thoughts, and present loudly and clearly coherent points within the time allotted. All students are able to adequately answer critique questions with deeper details while still prioritizing relevant information.

##### **Written Communication Skills**

Four written project reports, weekly discussion postings, and final deliverables will require students to clearly and concisely prioritize their development and describe coherently their learnings. Students are able to adequately separate summaries from details and use appendixes for supporting material. Students are able to clearly and concisely communicate their ideas in weekly postings about the readings, contribute original analysis, and respond to each other's postings interactively in order to build a conversation (not merely a set of singular points).

##### **Visual Communication Skills**

A design journal is required throughout the course and is due at the end. In addition, prototypes and visual presentations are critiqued throughout the class, based on clear, concise visual communication. Students show competency and improvement in using visual tools and techniques in their sketches, presentations, and prototypes.

##### **Leadership Skills**

Students will be required to take turns leading their teams as well as demonstrate that they understand the fundamentals of leading (sustainable) change within organizations.

Project deliverables, such as project summaries and sustainable return on investment calculations allow students to demonstrate how they form and support arguments outlining sustainable benefits of their solutions.

## Evaluation and Grading:

This studio course is a 6-credit course. Students can expect to spend approximately 8-12 hours a week on average in completing assignments in reading, group projects, and online discussion and interaction.

The grading range for the course is A-F, with weighting as follows:

Individual Classroom (or online) Participation & Attendance	15 pts.	20%
Short-Term Group Projects (product evaluations, studies, in class work)	10 pts.	20%
Long-Term Group Project (selected by team)	40 pts.	40%
Design Journal	10 pts.	10%
Lessons Learned Paper and Discussion	10 pts.	10%
	100 pts.	100%

**Academic Integrity:** We encourage full group and class collaboration on all aspects of this course. It is almost impossible to share too much information in product development. We do expect that all team members will contribute substantially to the project efforts, although some students will choose to devote themselves to the projects beyond what is required for the course. Students will be asked to critique and contribute to the development projects of others in the class in a cooperative, supportive environment, and will be asked to submit critiques of their own group and group members during the course of the semester. However, individual assignments, such as posts, are to be done individually, in the own words of the student.

**Non-original work will be disqualified. Late assignments will be deducted 5% for each day late.**

Grades will be assigned for cumulative points according to the following formula:

90 – 100%	A
80 – 90%	B
70 – 80%	C
60 – 70%	D
< 60%	F

## Books and Materials:

This course is designed to use three books as their primary texts. These address different approaches and domains.

***Experience Design 1.1***, Nathan Shedroff, Experience Design Books, 2009, ISBN: 978-0982233900 [www.experiencedesignbooks.com](http://www.experiencedesignbooks.com)

***A Natural History of the Senses***, by Diane Ackerman, 1991, Vintage Press, ISBN: 978-0679735663 [www.amazon.com/Natural-History-Senses-Diane-Ackerman/dp/0679735666](http://www.amazon.com/Natural-History-Senses-Diane-Ackerman/dp/0679735666)

**The Secret of Scent**, by Luca Turin, Harper Perennial, ISBN: 978-0-06-113384-8  
[www.amazon.com/Secret-Scent-Adventures-Perfume-Science/dp/0061133841](http://www.amazon.com/Secret-Scent-Adventures-Perfume-Science/dp/0061133841)

Optional:

**Experience Design 1 Cards**, Nathan Shedroff, Experience Design Books, 2009, ISBN: 978-0982233917 [www.experiencedesignbooks.com](http://www.experiencedesignbooks.com)

**The Spell of the Sensuous**, David Abram, Experience Vintage Books, 1997, ISBN: 978-0679776390 <http://www.amazon.com/Spell-Sensuous-Perception-Language-More-Than-Human/dp/0679776397>

**Prophet of Innovation**, by Thomas McCraw, Harvard University Press, ISBN: 978-0674025233  
[www.amazon.com/Prophet-Innovation-Schumpeter-Creative-Destruction/dp/0674025237](http://www.amazon.com/Prophet-Innovation-Schumpeter-Creative-Destruction/dp/0674025237)

## Schedule and Deliverables

Week	Dates	Topics & Activities
1		<p><b>Experience Design</b></p> <p><b>Read:</b> <i>A Natural History of the Senses</i>, pages 65-124</p> <p><b>Read:</b> <i>Experience Design 1.1</i>, pages 2-33</p> <p><b>Presentation and Discussion:</b> The six dimensions of Experience, Meaningful Experiences</p> <p>Discussion of class projects and syllabus</p> <p><b>Presentation and Discussion:</b> Review of Design Methods: (iteration, critique, brainstorming, etc.)</p> <p><b>Presentation and Discussion:</b> Stakeholder, Design, and User Research Techniques</p> <p><b>Begin:</b> Keep a Design Journal of your ideas, issues, and influences throughout the rest of the semester. These should be a collection of visual and written entries and need not be organized strictly by date. This will be turned-in at the end of the semester. You can do this digitally or in a physical notebook (which is recommended).</p> <p><b>Begin:</b> Semester Project</p> <p>Assemble a 4-5 person group for the duration of the class project and select a domain for customer research within the class project theme (if any). Indicate your initial perception of the impact of the chosen product, market, and customers (your team's bias)?</p>
2		<p><b>Touch and Feeling</b></p> <p><b>Read:</b> <i>Experience Design 1.1</i>, pages 244-245, 258-263</p> <p><b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading</p> <p><b>In class:</b> Exercise in exploring touch</p> <p><b>Customer and Design Research</b></p> <p><b>Watch:</b> Brenda Laurel's Presentation on Design Research: <a href="http://webcast.berkeley.edu/event_details.php?webcastid=21151">webcast.berkeley.edu/event_details.php?webcastid=21151</a></p> <p><b>Read:</b> <i>Needfinding: The Why and How of Uncovering People's Needs:</i> <a href="http://www.jumpassociates.com/articles/needfinding.pdf">www.jumpassociates.com/articles/needfinding.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Read:</b> Setting Up Business Stakeholder Interviews, Part 1: <a href="http://www.boxesandarrows.com/view/setting-up-business">www.boxesandarrows.com/view/setting-up-business</a></p> <p><b>Read:</b> Setting Up Business Stakeholder Interviews, Part 2: <a href="http://www.boxesandarrows.com/view/setting-up-business22">www.boxesandarrows.com/view/setting-up-business22</a></p> <p><b>Read:</b> Creating Good Interview and Survey Questions: <a href="http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/559/06">owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/559/06</a></p>

	<b>Post:</b> Team summary of project plan/overview (draft) <b>Write:</b> Design Journal Entry
3	<b>Information Design</b> <b>Read:</b> <i>Experience Design 1.1</i> , pages 34-107, 108-133 <b>Presentation and Discussion:</b> Information Design <b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading <b>Write:</b> Design Journal Entry
4	<b>Taste</b> <b>Read:</b> <i>A Natural History of the Senses</i> , pages 125-172 <b>Read:</b> <i>Experience Design 1.1</i> , pages 252-257 <b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading <b>In class:</b> Exercise in exploring taste <b>Post:</b> Customer Research Presentation <b>Write:</b> Design Journal Entry
5	<b>Interface Design</b> <b>Read:</b> <i>Experience Design 1.1</i> , pages 108-133 <b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading <b>Post:</b> Team Project Presentation
	<b>Concept Generation and Selection</b> <b>Present and Critique: Customer Research</b> (15 minutes with additional 10 for critique) This is the presentation of your customer/design research to the rest of the class. This should be summary of the interviews and other you've conducted, not a review of everything you documented. Consider representing your research in terms of common personas and behavior scenarios. <b>Discussion:</b> Lessons Learned about research <b>In Class:</b> Concept Generation: Brainstorming <b>Post:</b> Team summary of project plan/overview (revised) <b>Write:</b> Design Journal Entry
6	<b>Interaction Design</b> <b>Read:</b> <i>Experience Design 1.1</i> , pages 134-243 <b>Read:</b> Interaction Design: <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interaction_design">en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interaction_design</a> <b>Presentation and Discussion:</b> Interaction Design <b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading <b>Post:</b> Group Assignment: Competitive Product Assessment Upload your group's Competitive Product Assessment document in Word, Excel, or PDF format. This should be a short descriptive summary (and, most likely, diagram) of the current solutions available to your customers for completing the goals/challenges and needs/desires that you're targeting. These may be direct competitors (such as less sustainable solutions in the existing product space), related solutions (such as other modes or ways to accomplish something similar--for example, a car compared to a scooter or bicycle), or radical solutions that transcend medium (such as service solutions competing with product solutions). You might describe the experience dynamics around these different approaches but highlight the salient issues you've identified in your design research and how the competing solutions rank on these <b>Post:</b> Fill-out Experience Template and Meaning Template <b>Write:</b> Design Journal Entry
7	<b>Sight</b> <b>Read:</b> <i>A Natural History of the Senses</i> , pages 227-286 <b>Read:</b> <i>Experience Design 1.1</i> , pages 270-275, 276-301 <b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading

**In class:** Discussion

**Development: Prototyping**

**Present and Critique:** Project Status, Prototype Solutions

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|----|---|
| 8  | <p><b>Sensorial Design</b><br/><b>Read:</b> <i>Experience Design 1.1</i>, pages 276-301<br/><b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading<br/><b>In class:</b> Discussion and Critique<br/><b>Write:</b> Design Journal Entry<br/><b>Post:</b> <i>Present rough model and form studies (product) and/or service prototyping artifacts (service)</i></p>  |
| 9  | <p><b>Service Design</b><br/><b>Read:</b> <i>Service Design</i>: <a href="http://www.designcouncil.org.uk/en/About-Design/Design-Disciplines/Service-design-by-Bill-Hollins">www.designcouncil.org.uk/en/About-Design/Design-Disciplines/Service-design-by-Bill-Hollins</a><br/><b>Review:</b> Service Ecology Example: <a href="http://www.interaction-ivrea.it/theses/2002-03/c.noessel/svceco.htm">www.interaction-ivrea.it/theses/2002-03/c.noessel/svceco.htm</a><br/><b>Review:</b> Service Design (Howard Design): <a href="http://www.howardesign.com/exp/service/">www.howardesign.com/exp/service/</a><br/><b>Presentation and Discussion:</b> Service Design<br/><b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading<br/><b>Write:</b> Design Journal Entry</p> |
| 10 | <p><b>Smell</b><br/><b>Read:</b> <i>A Natural History of the Senses</i>, pages 3-64<br/><b>Read:</b> <i>Experience Design 1.1</i>, pages 246-251<br/><b>Read:</b> <i>The Secret of Scent</i><br/><b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading<br/><b>In class:</b> Exercise in exploring smell<br/><br/><b>Present and Critique:</b> <i>Present developed models, artifacts, and service flow</i><br/><b>Write:</b> Design Journal Entry</p>  |
| 11 | <p><b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading<br/><b>In class:</b> Discussion and Critique<br/><b>Write:</b> Design Journal Entry</p>   |
| 12 | <p><b>In class:</b> Discussion and Critique<br/><b>Write:</b> Design Journal Entry</p>  |
| 13 | <p><b>Hear</b><br/><b>Read:</b> <i>A Natural History of the Senses</i>, pages 173-226<br/><b>Read:</b> <i>Experience Design 1.1</i>, pages 264-269<br/><b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading<br/><b>In class:</b> Exercise in exploring hearing<br/><b>Write:</b> Design Journal Entry</p>   |
| 14 | <p><b>Synesthesia</b><br/><b>Read:</b> <i>A Natural History of the Senses</i>, pages 287-300<br/><b>Discuss:</b> Week's reading<br/><br/><b>Post:</b> Final presentation of Phase 2 development<br/><b>Write:</b> Final Design Journal Entry</p>  |
| 15 | <p><b>Present and Critique:</b> Presentation of Final Solution and Prototypes (15 minutes with 10 additional minutes of Q&amp;A)<br/><b>In Class:</b> Design Journal Review and discussion<br/><b>Post:</b> Final Project Report<br/>Discussion of Lessons Learned (Post-It Exercise)</p>   |

