

Parsons School of Design Art, Media & Technology PSAM 3050, Collab: Network Interfacing; CRN 2062 Spring 2019	January 22, 2019 – May 7, 2019 Tuesdays, 12:10pm – 2:50pm 6 East 16th Street, Rm. 1618 Callil Capuozzo – capuozzc@newschool.edu Lukas Eigler-Harding – eigll343@newschool.edu
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Course Description

Networks and their interfaces dictate how we engage with the world around us. They determine what kind of information we have access to and develop preferences for, how and with whom we communicate, and what we believe. In this course, students will research, design, and develop a peer-to-peer network that allows for an intensive exploration of how interfaces filter our information, guide our social dynamics, and ultimately shape our perceptions and biases. Students will learn to use code as a medium to work individually and collaboratively throughout the semester to contribute to a collection of structural features, UI iterations, and documentation.

Learning Outcomes

By the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Increased proficiency in web-native languages (javascript and html/css) and increased practice in independently research and learning/implementing unfamiliar technical topics.
2. Understanding of UX/UI patterns and practices as outlined by various facets of interface culture (web 1.0, 2.0, google material, apple human interface guidelines).
3. An understanding of peer-to-peer networks, distributed databases, and new models of networked communication (dat, ipfs, blockchain, etc.)
4. Increased exposure to canonized and counter-canon texts relating to online communities and digital communication.
5. Students will learn to navigate group-led research initiatives and present cohesive multilateral findings.

Assessable Tasks

This course consists of two primary projects, small-scale sprints, in-class exercises, multi-format critiques, and take-home readings + in-class discussions. The assignments are listed below (assignments are subject to change):

Sprint 1: Reskinning

Download the provided boilerplate and become comfortable with its directory and file structure. Reskin it's basic output with css. If you feel comfortable, alter the outputting template literals for a more customized experience.

Goal

This sprint should act as an opportunity for you to refresh your CSS and Javascript as well as give you some exposure to the types of functions we'll use in this class.

Sprint 2: DatArchive API

Build / publish a stand-alone dat website. Consider, what would you want to host in a distributed network? What is the format of the medium best suited for?

If you are comfortable, use the [DatArchive API](#) to read and write a JSON file (i.e. your website should read the contents and append it to the DOM. Your site should also offer some sort of interface that can update the file).

Goal

This sprint should be used to become more comfortable with the concepts of the Dat network and the DatArchive API. Feel free to play around with the API's different methods.

Network Project 1: Enhancement

Individual project, ~ 6 weeks

Research, design, and develop a new feature for our network that can be implemented by others. Consider what features are part of networks you frequently use. What do they add to your experience? How might our network benefit from them?

Deliverables:

- A javascript file containing your feature's function(s)
- A single-page site introducing and providing documentation on how others might use your function

Network Project 2: Shaping networks

Group project, ~ 6 weeks

Over the course of the next six weeks, collaboratively design and develop an interface for our network with your group.

Considerations:

- How will you collaborate with your group? Weekly meetings? Collaborative coding sessions? Divide and conquer tasks?
- In what way might you test your interface?
- What can you pull from previous designs?
- What features will you include? What features will you omit?
- Is your product a single page? Multiple? Is it customizable?

Deliverables:

- a repository of your interface
- documentation of various users using your interface
- a single-page site introducing and providing necessary documentation to your interface

Evaluation and Final Grade Calculation

This a studio course: primary academic and constructive feedback given in a critique-based setting. Students are expected to act with agency in the research and exploration of new topics, and technical skills. A mid-semester check-in will also inform students of their academic standing. Additionally, students not meeting required criteria will be notified at the teacher's discretion.

Below is the grade calculation:

In-class Assignments	40%
Take-home Assignments	40%
In-class Participation and Attitude	20%
TOTAL:	100%

Course Outline

The course outline is subject to change. [Academic Calendar](#).

Day	Itinerary	Assignment
Day 1 Jan 22nd	- Intro to class - Intro to Dat & Beaker - Discussion of terms - Class Exercise	- Sprint 1: Reskinning - Post to our network! "Hello World" - Come up with 5 names for our network Reading: Thoughtless Acts Formalizing User Rights on the Web Resources: html/css refresher
Day 2 Jan 29th	- Assignment review, questions, and group conversation - In a group of 2-3: let's re-do the first exercise and post to the network through your interface. - DatArchive and Sprint 2 introduction	- Sprint 2: DatArchive API Reading: - Laurel's Essay Post to our network from the list of prompts
Day 3 Feb 5th	- DatArchive API lecture - Network Interfacing Codebase conversation/dissection + collaboration - Group Workshop: Ideate and build an interface for our network that uses the DatArchive API directly	Finish building the interface you started in class Reading: - Mosaic of Subcultures
Day 4 Feb 12th	Guest Speaker + in-class workshop: Cab & Chris (are.na and introducing new features)	Project 1: Research and prepare three functions/features/futures Reading: Silicon Valley's Sixty-Year Love Affair with the Word "Tool"
Day 5 Feb 19th	- Project 1: Initial presentations + discussions - Lecture/exercise on compatibility and integration	Project 1: Choose a feature and begin developing it. Take note of questions and problems you run into. Reading: Olia Lialina's Turing Complete User and American Artist's Black Goopy Universe

Day 6 Feb 26th	- Project 1: Individual check-in - Class demo/workshop: group interface iteration!	Project 1: continue developing your feature.
Day 7 Mar 5th	Guest Speaker + in-class workshop Laurel / Rahul *Mid Semester Check-in	Project 1: continue developing your feature. Begin considering documentation. Reading TK
Day 8 Mar 12th	Work Session	Project 1: prepare project for final review!
Day 9 Mar 26th	- Individual Project: Final Review - Project 2: Prompt and kick-off exercise	Project 2: research Reading: TK
Day 10 April 2nd	GUN & real-time networks, introduction and in-class workshop	Project 2: iterations
Day 11 April 9th	- Project 2: Iteration presentations + group critiques - Project 2: strategy, planning, & collaboration - Guest Speaker: Edouard (American Interfaces)	Project 2: build
Day 12 April 16th	- Project 2: check-in - In-class workshop: pair up and make a single-feature interface.	Project 2: build Reading: TK
Day 13 April 23rd	- Work session on Interface & Feature	Interface & Feature, resolve Make sure you're up-to-date w. your Prompts
Day 14 April 30th	Work session *Course Evaluations	- Interface & Feature, resolve and prepare for presentation - Final Prompt
Day 15 May 7th	Final crit! :)	—

Readings

Readings, films, podcasts, and other media will be assigned on a weekly basis in response to class discussions and interests.

- [Mosaic of Subcultures](#)

- Thoughtless Acts, Jane Fulton Suri and IDEO

- Olia Lialina

- Protocol, Alexander Galloway
- Benevolent Deception in Human Computer Interaction, Eytan Adar, Desney S. Tan, and Jaime Teevan
- A Pattern Language, Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa, and Murray Silverstein
- Alan Kay
- A Cyborg Manifesto, Donna J. Haraway
- Deschooling Society, Ivan Illich
- On Weaving, Anni Albers
- The Library of Babel, Jorge Luis Borges
- Grapefruit, Yoko Ono
- The Berlin key or how to do words with things, Bruno Latour
- Black Goopy Universe, American Artist
- [Software as Ideology](#), Alexander Galloway
- [In Defense of the Poor Image](#), Hito Steyerl
- <https://thecreativeindependent.com/series/are.na/>
- The Death and Life of Great American Cities, Jane Jacobs (excerpts tbd)

Materials and Supplies

Please have a working laptop with a code editor and the Beaker Browser installed ready for every class.

Resources

The university provides many resources to help students achieve academic and artistic excellence. These resources include:

- [The University \(and associated\) Libraries](#)
- [The University Learning Center](#)
- [University Disabilities Service](#)

In keeping with the university's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations is welcome to meet with me privately. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to contact Student Disability Service (SDS). SDS will conduct an intake and, if appropriate, the Director will provide an academic accommodation notification letter for you to bring to me. At that point, I will review the letter with you and discuss these accommodations in relation to this course.

Making Center

The Making Center is a constellation of shops, labs, and open workspaces that are situated across the New School to help students express their ideas in a variety of materials and methods. We have resources to help support woodworking, metalworking, ceramics and pottery work, photography and film, textiles, printmaking, 3D printing, manual and CNC machining, and more. A staff of technicians and student workers provide expertise and maintain the different shops and labs. Safety is a primary concern, so each area has policies for access, training, and etiquette with which students and faculty should be familiar. Many areas require specific orientations or trainings before access is granted. Detailed information about the resources available, as well as schedules, trainings, and policies can be found at resources.parsons.edu.

Grading Standards

Undergraduate

A student's final grades and GPA are calculated using a 4.0 scale.

A [4.0] — Work of exceptional quality, which often goes beyond the stated goals of the course

A- [3.7] — Work of very high quality

B+ [3.3] — Work of high quality that indicates higher than average abilities

B [3.0] — Very good work that satisfies the goals of the course

B- [2.7] — Good work

C+ [2.3] — Above-average work

C [2.0] — Average work that indicates an understanding of the course material; passable

Satisfactory completion of a course is considered to be a grade of C or higher.

C- [1.7] — Passing work but below good academic standing

D [1.0] — Below-average work that indicates a student does not fully understand the assignments; Probation level though passing for credit

F [0.0] — Failure, no credit

Graduate

A Work of exceptional quality

A- Work of high quality

B+ Very good work

B Good work; satisfies course requirements

Satisfactory completion of a course is considered to be a grade of B or higher.

B- Below-average work

C+ Less than adequate work

C Well below average work

C- Poor work; lowest possible passing grade

F Failure

GM Grade missing for an individual

Grades of D are not used in graduate level courses.

Grade of W

The grade of W may be issued by the Office of the Registrar to a student who officially withdraws from a course within the applicable deadline. There is no academic penalty, but the grade will appear on the student transcript. A grade of W may also be issued by an instructor to a graduate student (except at Parsons and Mannes) who has not completed course requirements nor arranged for an Incomplete.

Grade of Z

The grade of Z is issued by an instructor to a student who has not attended or not completed all required work in a course but did not officially withdraw before the withdrawal deadline. It differs from an "F," which would indicate that the student technically completed requirements but that the level of work did not qualify for a passing grade.

Grades of Incomplete

The grade of I, or temporary incomplete, may be granted to a student under unusual and extenuating circumstances, such as when the student's academic life is interrupted by a medical or personal emergency. This mark is not given automatically but only upon the student's request and at the discretion of the instructor. A Request for Incomplete form must be completed and signed by student and instructor. The time allowed for

completion of the work and removal of the “I” mark will be set by the instructor with the following limitations.

Undergraduate students:

Work must be completed no later than the seventh week of the following fall semester for spring or summer term incompletes and no later than the seventh week of the following spring semester for fall term incompletes. Grades of “I” not revised in the prescribed time will be recorded as a final grade of “F” by the Registrar’s Office.

Graduate students:

Work must be completed no later than one year following the end of the class. Grades of “I” not revised in the prescribed time will be recorded as a final grade of “N” by the Registrar’s Office.

College, School, Program and Class Policies

A comprehensive overview of policy may be found under [Policies: A to Z](#). Students are also encouraged to consult the [Academic Catalog for Parsons](#).

Canvas

Use of Canvas may be an important resource for this class. Students should check it for announcements before coming to class each week.

Electronic Devices

The use of electronic devices (phones, tablets, laptops, cameras, etc.) is permitted when the device is being used in relation to the course’s work. All other uses are prohibited in the classroom and devices should be turned off before class starts.

Responsibility

Students are responsible for all assignments, even if they are absent. Late assignments, failure to complete the assignments for class discussion and/or critique, and lack of preparedness for in-class discussions, presentations and/or critiques will jeopardize your successful completion of this course.

Active Participation and Attendance

Class participation is an essential part of class and includes: keeping up with reading, assignments, projects, contributing meaningfully to class discussions, active participation in group work, and coming to class regularly and on time.

Parsons’ attendance guidelines were developed to encourage students’ success in all aspects of their academic programs. Full participation is essential to the successful completion of coursework and enhances the quality of the educational experience for all, particularly in courses where group work is integral; thus, Parsons promotes high levels of attendance. Students are expected to attend classes regularly and promptly and in compliance with the standards stated in this course syllabus.

While attendance is just one aspect of active participation, absence from a significant portion of class time may prevent the successful attainment of course objectives. A significant portion of class time is generally defined as the equivalent of three weeks, or 20%, of class time. Lateness or early departure from class may be recorded as one full absence. Students may be asked to withdraw from a course if habitual absenteeism or tardiness has a negative impact on the class environment.

We will assess each student’s performance against all of the assessment criteria in determining your final grade.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, academic warning, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university.

Students are responsible for understanding the University's policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. It is the responsibility of students to learn the procedures specific to their discipline for correctly and appropriately differentiating their own work from that of others. The full text of the policy, including adjudication procedures, is found on the university website under [Policies: A to Z](#).

Resources regarding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it can be found on the [Learning Center's website](#).

The New School views "academic honesty and integrity" as the duty of every member of an academic community to claim authorship for his or her own work and only for that work, and to recognize the contributions of others accurately and completely. This obligation is fundamental to the integrity of intellectual debate, and creative and academic pursuits. Academic honesty and integrity includes accurate use of quotations, as well as appropriate and explicit citation of sources in instances of paraphrasing and describing ideas, or reporting on research findings or any aspect of the work of others (including that of faculty members and other students). Academic dishonesty results from infractions of this "accurate use". The standards of academic honesty and integrity, and citation of sources, apply to all forms of academic work, including submissions of drafts of final papers or projects. All members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the standards of academic honesty and integrity. Please see the complete policy in the Parsons Catalog.

Intellectual Property Rights

The New School (the "university") seeks to encourage creativity and invention among its faculty members and students. In doing so, the University affirms its traditional commitment to the personal ownership by its faculty members and students of Intellectual Property Rights in works they create. The complete policy governing Intellectual Property Rights may be seen on the [university website, on the Provost's page](#).