

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES
School of Arts & Architecture
Department of Design Media Arts

Course Name & Number: DESMA 141: UI/UX and Web Design

Academic Term: Fall 2025

Location: Broad Art Center 4220

Day and Time: Mon & Wed 9am—12:00pm

Instructor: Masato Nakada

Pronouns: He / Him

Office hours & Location:

Monday 12pm-1pm Broad Art Center 4220

Make appointment in advance

Email: nakadam@ucla.edu

Teaching Assistant: Ren Burch

pronouns: they/ them

email: renburc@ucla.edu

Office Hours: Available by Appointment

Summary

This course takes two approaches of *Empathy & Limitation* to design for screen-based mediums. An approach of *Empathy* helps designers to prototype a single task app for a specific audience / a niche community with design decisions made with end users in mind. An approach of *Limitation* allows designers to find infinite design moves within the limitations of basic coding. Both approaches are helpful for controlling content, form and action for screen-based layouts while producing designs that are imaginative and unexpected.

Objectives

Investigate how visual language manifests in cultures

Create design systems that allow varied and nuanced applications

Learn technical skills like prototyping, Figma, web coding, image-making, screen-based typesetting and layout making

Create and edit content with a unique viewpoint

Engage in form-making for specific audiences

RECOMMENDED READINGS

[My website is a shifting house next to a river of knowledge. What could yours be?](#) by Laurel Schwulst

<https://sundaysites.cafe/> inclusive lo-fi coding prompts

<https://carly.substack.com/> Carly Ayres, great insight on contemporary design / UX / economy issues

[Brand ≠ Product: When Typography Breaks](#) by Mitch Paone (Dia Studio)

REQUIRED & RECOMMENDED MATERIALS

[Weekly Assignments](#) (Bookmark this link, you will use this often!)

[Install Figma Education](#)

[Google Material Design](#)

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE (EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS)

DESMA 141 is a journey-based, process-based course. This means that your weekly assignments, your progress, your iterations and your design /coding decisions you make throughout the entire semester are valuable, if not more valuable than what you submit at the end of the semester as a final output. Ask questions, have discussions amongst your peers & faculty on a weekly basis. Be fearless and imaginative in image-making & typography to create imaginative layouts on screens.

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Ren Burché

GRADING BREAKDOWN

Weekly Assignments (60%)

Class Participation (30%)

Project Completion & End of Semester Pres. (10%)

PARTICIPATION

There will be small group crits to review works and give feedback from test driving your digital products. Be attentive and supportive in this group crit environment. Your peers are a powerful agency to improve your work. There will be in class lectures, be ready to chime in! Your gut reaction, hot takes, your critical assessment helps spark up productive class discussions.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

The use of AI is approved in this course, as our current professional workforce is expected to use it. Keep in mind, a recent study from [*MIT shows that 95% of enterprise generative AI pilots are failing, delivering zero measurable return on investment*](#). This headline is a good reminder that AI won't help you to be a creative designer, it will help you make useful assets and output at scale but it is still up to us (creatives) to work on top of these AI outputs to create work that's **unexpected, imaginative and interesting**. These mentioned adjectives can be achieved through your simple, consistent act of *making*. Your power of making is greater than the power of AI.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Unexcused Absences:

Unexcused absences will **lower your grade**.

More than 3 absences is an **automatic fail** and must be addressed on a case-by-case basis

Excused Absences:

Excused absences must be accompanied by a doctor's note.

It's your responsibility to email your teacher & TA and keep an open channel to communicate so they are aware.

Total Absences:

A total of **3 or more absences** of any kind will result in an **Failing** grade for the class. Certain extenuating circumstances (such as a prolonged illness) that prevent completion of a final project may result in an **Incomplete** grade.

Tardiness:

There will be a 5 minute grace period after the starting time of the class.

For example: If the class starts at 9:00am you will be marked **late** if you arrive between 9:05-9:15am.

You will be marked **absent** if you arrive after 9:15am.

Two **late** marks equate to one **absence**

MEDICAL NOTES

Please be aware that the Ashe Center recently implemented an online system that allows students to self-generate their own non-verified medical notes. This has led to a system where students can now obtain 3 different types of medical notes:

1. Self-Generated (not verified) statement of Illness or Injury
2. Verified Illness or Injury
3. Student was in an appointment during class time

While we are required to make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities, faculty can decide to whether to accept medical notes, even verified ones, at their own discretion.

There are many unintended consequences to requesting/accepting medical notes from students. One primary consequence is that students seeking medical notes for minor ailments has resulted in a severe drain on our student health facilities. The online, self-generated notes were developed in response to this high demand for such notes.

The verified illness notes would seem the most reliable note, but are often the result of an appointment with a Physician sometime after the illness is over, and they therefore rely on what the students report. However, some students do seek a medical appointment for a note while ill. This has had the unintended consequence that these students are up and about when they would be better off in bed and not spreading their illness to other students.

You will want to determine if you will accept medical notes, for what you will accept these, and what type of note. Consider alternatives to requiring a medical note, such as simply not accepting them and then allowing the student to drop attendance at a certain number of classes.

LATE WORK

Ultimately, all assignments' hard deadlines are in Week 10. You may re-work, continue to improve your work up to this point. As a final week, we will review all of your work as a presentation..

ASSIGNMENTS/PROJECTS

Subculture / Sub-Community's single task app & process

Walkthrough Video of the app

Weekly webposters (4—5 posters)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

	Mondays	Wednesdays
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Week 1 Sep 29 & Oct1	Single Task App for a Subculture Intro Hello. Presentation on Subculture. Research & define your single task for a specific community.	Single Task App for a Subculture Selected Community / Subculture presentation. Group Crits and Brainstorm App ideas
Week 2 Oct 6 & 8	Single Task App for a Subculture Lecture on Wireframe Figma tutorials Group Crits with Masato	Single Task App for a Subculture Test drive everyone's wireframes in groups. Review Forms ar
Week 3 Oct 13 & 15	Single Task App for a Subculture Image-making Week Pick two keywords / adjective and make 2 Figma posters with interactions. Type elements & Design Principles	Single Task App for a Subculture 2 more posters (revise or new)
Week 4 Oct 20 & 22	Single Task App for a Subculture Wireframe to Designed Screens. Taking a big leap! Google Material Design Design System, Style Guideline 2 design directions for most active screens.	Single Task App for a Subculture Keep running the marathon. Review 2 design directions Group crits
Week 5 Oct 27 & 29	Single Task App for a Subculture Keep running the marathon. Workshop & Check-ins	Single Task App for a Subculture Summarize your proof of concept & prototype in a walk-through screen recorded video.
Week 6 Nov 3 & 5	Single Task App for a Subculture Summarize your proof of concept & prototype in a walk-through screen recorded video. Upload in class.	Basic Yet Creative Coding How to leap from a basic layout to an experimental layout. How to utilize conventional web components for unconventional layouts. While embracing the "messy dance"* between coding and designing, let's make a "missing" web poster / flyer! *Figma ↔ Code A reciprocal dance, a non-linear process to produce a webpage.
Week 7 Nov 10 & 12	Basic Yet Creative Coding Intro to HTML & CSS Coding Exercise: Dot Matrix Typography Select Design Principle	Basic Yet Creative Coding Intro to HTML & CSS Coding Exercise: ASCI Typography & Hover Effects Select Design Principle
Week 8 Nov 17 & 19	Basic Yet Creative Coding Intro to HTML & CSS Webposter / UI Sound playlist Select Design Principle	Basic Yet Creative Coding Intro to HTML & CSS Webposter about your music playlist Select Design Principle
Week 9 Nov 24 & 26	Basic Yet Creative Coding	Basic Yet Creative Coding

	Webposter about your week Select Design Principle	Webposter about your week Select Design Principle
Week 10 Dec 1 & 3	End of Semester—Wrap up! Students give a 10 min presentation of their 2 projects and highlight their key moments, findings.	End of Semester—Wrap up! Students give a 10 min presentation of their 2 projects and highlight their key moments, findings. (SET Surveys)
Finals Week - DMA Classes typically end week 10 - NO INSTRUCTION OR FINAL CRITS ARE ALLOWED ON FINALS WEEK. SCHEDULES FOR FINALS WEEK DO NOT FOLLOW THE SCHEDULE FROM THE QUARTER		

COVID-19

Students must adhere to the current campus directives related to COVID-19 mitigation, and refusal to do so may result in the student being asked to leave the classroom or referred to the Dean of Students. For more information about COVID-19 requirements on campus, please visit: <https://covid-19.ucla.edu/information-for-students/>.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The University of California, Los Angeles occupies the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary Lands of the Tongva and Chumash peoples. Our ability to gather and learn here is the result of coercion, dispossession, and colonization. We are grateful for the land itself and the people that have stewarded it through generations. While a land acknowledgment is not enough, it is first step in the work toward supporting decolonial and indigenous movements for sovereignty and self-determination. Read more about what land you're occupying: <https://native-land.ca/>

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY & SAFER SPACES:

We understand the classroom as a space for practicing freedom; where one may challenge psychic, social, and cultural borders and create meaningful artistic expressions. To do so we must acknowledge and embrace the different identities and backgrounds we inhabit. This means that we will use preferred pronouns, respect self-identifications, and be mindful of special needs. Disagreement is encouraged and supported, however our differences affect our conceptualization and experience of reality, and it is extremely important to remember that certain gender, race, sex, and class identities are more privileged while others are undermined and marginalized. Consequently, this makes some people feel more protected or vulnerable during debates and discussions. A collaborative effort between the students, TA, and instructor is needed to create a supportive learning environment. While everyone should feel free to experiment creatively and conceptually, if a class member points out that something you have said or shared with the group is offensive, avoid being defensive; instead approach the discussion as a valuable opportunity for us to grow and learn from one another. Alternatively if you feel that something said in discussion or included in a piece of work is harmful, you are encouraged to speak with the instructor or TA. **Statement adopted from voidLab at: <https://github.com/voidlab/diversity-statement>*

CENTER FOR ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION (CAE)

Students needing academic accommodations based on a disability should contact the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) at (310) 825-1501 or in person at Murphy Hall A255. When possible, students should contact the CAE within the first two weeks of the term as reasonable notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. For more information visit www.cae.ucla.edu.

UNDERGRADUTE WRITING CENTER

The [Undergraduate Writing Center](#) is a free service for all UCLA students, providing one-on-one appointments. Appointment topics include course papers, capstone projects, senior thesis papers or application materials (resumes, CVs, statements of purpose or cover letters).

INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

UCLA's Office for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion provides resources, events and information about current initiatives at UCLA to support equality for all members of the UCLA community. I hope that you will communicate with me or your TA if you experience anything in this course that does not support an inclusive environment. You can also report any incidents you may witness or experience on campus to the Office of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion on their website (<https://equity.ucla.edu>).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND INFORMATION ON STUDENT CONDUCT

UCLA is a community of scholars. In this community, all members including faculty, staff and students alike are responsible for maintaining standards of academic honesty. As a student and member of the University community, you are here to get an education and are, therefore, expected to demonstrate integrity in your academic endeavors. You are evaluated on your own merits. Cheating, plagiarism, collaborative work, multiple submissions without the permission of the professor, or other kinds of academic dishonesty are considered unacceptable behavior and will result in formal disciplinary proceedings usually resulting in suspension or dismissal. As specified in the [UCLA Student Conduct Code](#), violations or attempted violations of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, multiple submissions or facilitating academic dishonesty. When a student is suspected to have engaged in academic dishonesty, Academic Senate regulations require that the instructor report the allegation to the office of the Dean of Students. For more information, see the [UCLA Student Conduct Code](#).

TITLE IX

UCLA prohibits gender discrimination, including sexual harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. If you have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence, there are a variety of resources to assist you.

CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES:

You can receive confidential support and advocacy at the CARE Advocacy Office for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence, 1st Floor Wooden Center West, CAREadvocate@careprogram.ucla.edu, (310) 206-2465. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) also provides confidential counseling to all students and can be reached 24/7 at (310) 825-0768.

NON-CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES:

You can also report sexual violence or sexual harassment directly to the University's Title IX Coordinator, 2241 Murphy Hall, titleix@conet.ucla.edu, (310) 206-3417. Reports to law enforcement can be made to UCPD at (310) 825-1491. These offices may be required to pursue an official investigation.

Faculty and TAs are required under the UC Policy on Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment to inform the Title IX Coordinator—A NON-CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCE—should they become aware that you or any other student has experienced sexual violence or sexual harassment.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND RESILIENCE

UCLA is renowned for academic excellence, and yet we know that many students feel overwhelmed at times by demands to succeed academically, socially and personally. Our campus community is committed to helping all students thrive, learn to cope with stress, and build resilience. Remember, self-care is a skill that is critical to your long-term success. Here are some of the many resources available at UCLA to support you:

- **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):** <https://www.counseling.ucla.edu/> Provides counseling and other psychological/mental health services to students. Walk-in hours are Monday-Thursday 8am-4:30pm and Friday

9am-4:30pm in John Wooden Center West. Crisis counseling is also available 24 hours/day at (310) 825-0768.

- **Ashe Student Health and Wellness Center:** <http://www.studenthealth.ucla.edu> Provides high quality and accessible ambulatory healthcare and education by caring professionals to support the academic success and personal development of all UCLA students.
- **Healthy Campus Initiative (HCI):** <https://healthy.ucla.edu> Provides links to a wide variety of resources for enhancing physical and psychological well-being, positive social interactions, healthy sleep, healthy eating, healthy physical activity and more.
- **Campus and Student Resilience:** <https://www.resilience.ucla.edu/> Provides programs to promote resilience and trains students to help support their peers.
- **UCLA Recreation:** <https://www.recreation.ucla.edu/> Offers a broad array of services and programs including fitness, yoga, dance, martial arts, meditation, sports, and much more.
- **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion:** <https://equity.ucla.edu/> Committed to providing an equal learning, working and living environment at UCLA and supports a range of programs to promote these goals campus-wide.
- **UCLA GRIT Coaching Program:** <https://www.grit.ucla.edu/> GRIT stands for Guidance, Resilience, Integrity and Transformation. In this program, UCLA students receive individualized support from trained peer coaches to manage stress, fostering positive social connections, set goals, and navigate campus resources.

Resources for Students Dealing with Financial Stress

- **Economic Crisis Response:** <https://www.studentincrisis.ucla.edu/Economic-Crisis-Response> provides support and guidance to students who have self-identified, or are identified by UCLA faculty or staff, as experiencing a financial crisis that impacts their academic success at UCLA.
- **Bruin Shelter:** <http://www.bruinshelter.org/> provides a safe, supportive environment for fellow college students experiencing homelessness by fostering a collaborative effort between universities, community-based organizations, and service providers.
- **The CPO Food Closet:** <http://www.cpo.ucla.edu/cpo/foodcloset/> provides free food for any UCLA student who may be experiencing hunger and/or struggling to attain food due to financial hardships.