EXPERIENCE DESIGN

Fall 2012

CFA AR 597

LEVEL	Elective
CREDITS	2
MEETS	Once a week
DATES	Fall 2012
LOCATION	[confirm]
INSTRUCTOR	Professor Nicholas Rock
OFFICE	[confirm]
CONTACT	nickrock@bu.edu
OFFICE HOURS	Mondays and Wednesdays 12–2, by appointment

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Overview

The term experience design is actually slightly misleading. We do not actually design an experience. We design or develop a plan to create opportunities for experiences, and interactions. As designers we have to draw from all of our own life experiences, influences and exposures to different things as a way of developing opportunities for new experiences. We also need to understand that our audience or users will in turn bring their own experiences and influences to the project as well. These influences then affect what their actual experience will be.

Experience is something that can be defined in terms of scale. For example, something that's personal, something that's intimate that you experience with others, something that you experience on your own or with others in the environment. It may even be something much larger, that may transcend focused objects and locations such as a brand experience. In this class we're going to test out this theory of experience at scale through a broad range of projects, case studies, readings and lectures in an attempt to frame that scale of small to large. We will attempt to cover a lot in a short amount of time so we will move pretty quickly. This class is a design studio so we will be emphasizing design concepts and how a process of research and discovery support and provide the basis for the concepts.

The goal of this studio is to help you begin to develop a process of approaching, defining and solving design problems, taking into consideration both your voice as a designer and the needs of your audience. You will be asked to complete a series of projects which confront this idea at different levels of scale. The intent is not to focus on a

specific aspect of experience design but to set you up to become a better design thinker.

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Course Structure

Class Rules

- Work hard.
- Be respectful.
- Show up. And show up on time.
- Work harder.
- Show your work, process, everything you have or be prepared to, daily. The more you are getting feedback from the class the better. It makes your work better and it helps you evolve as a designer.
- Questions. Ask them. Often. Questions are ALWAYS beneficial to the entire class, not just the person asking.
- Experiment. Sketch. Test. Sample. Prototype.
- The project is never complete.
- The printer is always broken.
- Collaborate.
- Dish it out and take it.
- Laugh.
- Be opinionated. Debate. Ask more questions.
- Don’t take it personally. Critique is for everyone’s benefit.
- I will challenge your ideas, be prepared to defend them.

Communication

It is expected that you as a class will help and support each other throughout this course and others for that matter. That said, I am of course fully accessible in class, at my office (general office hours are Mondays and Wednesdays 12–2; however please make an appointment with me), and via email: nickrock@bu.edu. Please do not use any other email address to contact me. All communication should go through my BU email address or via Basecamp.

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Projects

The projects in this class will be sequential, however we may also have work that happens simultaneously. There will be small weekly homework assignments in addition to readings given in context to certain projects.

Weekly Readings

Individual · weekly

Every week you will be given a reading based on the current level of scale of experience that we are discussing at that time. These readings are for your own benefit and I may refer to them in class.

Class Blog

Individual · weekly

We will be contributing to a BU design blog on Posterous (bugd.posterous.com). You will be given access to this blog today. Everyone will be expected to post at least one thing each week. You may post more if you choose. The only requirement is that you participate. This means you can post an image, video, etc or write a critique of a design. Really anything you would like to post that is design related. The idea is that you begin to form your own opinions about design by way of curating this blog.

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Assessment

Your grade in this class will be based on a number of factors:

- **Attendance.** Attendance at each class is mandatory, we meet only once a week so each class is important. Class discussion and critique are not things that are easily made up and happen regularly. You must contact me in advance if you need to miss a class. If you have more than one unexcused absence your mark will be lowered by one full grade. If you are late, or absent you must follow up with me, as you will still be responsible for the work. You should be scheduling appointments around your classes since you know your class schedule, and not the other way around.
- **Class Participation.** Part of the job as a designer is communicating effectively, on a design team, in a studio environment or with clients. You will be expected to be an active member of the class, particularly during critiques as all feedback is important. Discussion is an important part of the design process. If you are not participating regularly in the discussion you will be asked for your opinion.
- **Project Execution.** All projects should be given your full attention and effort. Each component of your projects will be reviewed, projects need to be submitted on deadline and should be complete according to project brief. Projects must be completed by the due date. Late work will be penalized. All parts of your projects in this class will be evaluated including process and research documents.
- **Project Process.** You are expected to document the process of each of your projects throughout the semester. This means, saving all sketches, writings mock ups etc. Your documents will be given the same attention to detail as your design work. The process for each project will make up a portion of your grade.

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Materials & Tools

- **Basecamp** — an online collaboration tool for centralized class communication: a central portal for class discussion outside of class and a digital library of class resources.
- **Posterous** — the BU design blog, bugd.posterous.com.