EXPERIENCE DESIGN

Fall 2013

CFA AR 597

LEVEL	Elective
CREDITS	2
MEETS	Once a week
DATES	Fall 2013
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

1. This class is a lot of work,
2. so work hard.
3. and be respectful. Yes to me, but also to your peers.
4. Make sure you show up,
5. and show up on time.
6. Work harder.
7. 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.
8. Questions. Ask them. Often. Questions are ALWAYS beneficial to the entire class, not just the person asking.
9. Experiment. Sketch. Test. Sample. Prototype. Rinse. Repeat.
10. The project is never complete.
11. The printer is always broken.
12. Collaborate.
13. Dish it out and take it.
14. Laugh. Don't cry.
15. Be opinionated. Debate. Ask more questions.
16. Don't take it personally.
17. I will help you be a better designer.
18. There are no favorites. If you do good work, or work hard it will be recognized. Likewise for poor work or laziness.
19. 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.

In addition to these avenues of communication we will also be using an online collaboration tool called Basecamp for centralized class communication. You all will

have access to our Basecamp site after the first class; this will act as a central portal for class discussion outside of class as well as a digital library of class resources, such as this syllabus, project briefs, certain readings as well as our class calendar.

04 Projects

The projects in this class will be sequential, however they will overlap because subject matter overlaps. Projects in the real world are rarely complete before the next project begins. In addition to your project work you may be given short readings that relate in some way to the project or topic of discussion that week. These readings are for your own benefit and I may refer to them in class.

We will be talking about Experience Design through different scales of experience. You will have 4 projects in this class that will take us through 4 scales of experience:

- Experience is personal.
- Experience is individual. Experience is shared.
- Experience is for anyone and everyone.
- Experience is everything.

05 Assessment

Your grade in this class will be based primarily on the body of work you produce over the course of the class. In addition, the following specific points will be factored into your final grade for the course:

- **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. I will not chase you down to catch you up. 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.
- **Group Work.** Designers rarely work independently. Completed work is almost always the result of a team effort of some sort, whether it be just designers, designer and client, designer, developer, writer etc. In this class there will be times when you will be asked to work as part of a team. Your contribution to the group will be assessed along with the final output of the group's work.

- **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.

You will not be graded on your projects individually. While we will have final critiques for each project, you may continue to work on an individual project and re-present the work at the semester final review. We will also be having individual, mid-term check-in meetings in which we will discuss your status in the class half way through the semester, to ensure that you all know where you stand and that we are all on the same page.

We will have a final review of work on the last day of the course. After which you will receive a letter grade based upon the following criteria:

- **A** — You demonstrate an advanced understanding of concepts presented and are able to complete work above and beyond suggested parameters.
- **B** — You exhibit a more than competent understanding of concepts presented and utilize these concepts in an articulate and noteworthy manner.
- **C** — You demonstrate a basic understanding of the information studied and apply this information to assigned problems meeting basic expectations but not going beyond suggested parameters.
- **D** — You exhibit limited understanding of the concepts and complete work below the level required for satisfactory performance.
- **F** — You demonstrate little or no understanding of course material, show little desire or motivation to complete the work, or turn in incomplete projects.

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Materials & Tools

- **Basecamp** — an online collaboration tool for centralized class communication.