EXPERIENCE DESIGN

Spring 2017

CFA AR 597

LEVEL	Elective
CREDITS	2
MEETS	Wednesdays · once a week
DATES	Spring 2017
LOCATION	[confirm]
INSTRUCTOR	Professor Nicholas Rock
OFFICE	808 Commonwealth Ave, 4th floor (connected to the graduate graphic design studios)
CONTACT	nickrock@bu.edu
OFFICE HOURS	Tuesdays and Thursdays 11–12:30; Wednesdays 12:30–2:30, by appointment

01

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.

03

Course Structure

Class Structure

Classes will be a mixture of mini lectures, discussions, individual and small group meetings, critiques, studio work time and presentations. We will always try to balance each week with in-studio work time so that you are able to work while I am in the studio with you and give you direct and immediate advice and guidance.

Scales of Experience

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:

1. Experience is personal.
2. Experience is individual. Experience is shared.
3. Experience is for anyone and everyone.
4. Experience is everything.

Availability Outside Class

I am fully accessible at my office — on the 4th floor of 808, connected to the graduate graphic design studios — 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.

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.

Project 01 — Experience Is Personal

Individual · February 1–15

You will be creating a personal scale object. You may define what this is exactly whether it's part calendar, daily journal, a personal diary, a photo journal, a fitness log, a deck of brainstorming cards, a cooking journal or even your own device for carrying all your stuff. It is entirely up to you. In the end this will be an actual object for you to carry so the scale is something that fits in your pocket or backpack etc. The goal is that it is

for you to use by yourself, even if you would plan to share with others. YOU are the audience for this project.

You will be defining all the parts to create an opportunity for experience, based on your own experiences, influences and ideals.

Requirements: Research document that contains your needs / wants, concepts, inspiration and sketching. Sketches and prototypes as needed. Actual object — a designed object, something you carry and physically / manually interact with. Care about your craft, don't be sloppy, work to the best of your ability.

What not to do: This project is to make an actual, physical thing. You are not designing an app. Don't waste time. You are the client, so you can work quickly. This project is short.

05

Assessment

You will be evaluated over the course of the class through the following specific points and all will be factored into your final grade for the course:

- **Attendance.** Attendance at each class is mandatory. As we only meet once a week time in class is crucial. 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. At my discretion, if you have more than one unexcused absence your mark will be lowered by as much as 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 a designer's job 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. Lack of participation will negatively impact your final grade.
- **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.
- **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. You will be given an opportunity to improve upon each project following that project's final critique.

- **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.
- **Being Professional.** As you are learning to be designers, one of the most important aspects of working professionally is the way you conduct and carry yourself in interactions with clients, employers, peers etc. Pay attention to emails you send, things you say in class. Give respect. Earn respect.

Basic Principles for Grading

We will not have a final review of work for the class. You will have your normal semester end reviews. 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.

06
Calendar

DATE	EVENT
Feb 1	Project 01 — research, concept, sketches due
Feb 8	Project 01 — draft designs due
Feb 15	Project 01 — final design due (crit)

07
Materials & Tools

- **Basecamp** — to consolidate class communications: a central portal for class discussion outside of class and a digital library of class resources.