User-Centered Design for Innovation

In today's world, the term "UX" is a favorite buzzword of companies everywhere wanting to increase their bottom line, but what does it really mean and how do you design for the "user experience"? And more importantly: How might we design systems that solve real problems, are useful, usable, and enjoyable for our users?

This course will teach you the basic principles and methods used in the user-centered design (UCD) process. Students will learn how to apply UCD to identify a problem space and using the UCD process, design an innovative solution to solve it.

Learning is project based and each lecture ties into the deliverable due the following week.

Course Objectives

After this course, students will be able to:

- Advocate and build-in support for user-centered design with your stakeholders
- Apply research methods for identifying target users and their problem spaces
- Use ideation techniques that go beyond brainstorming to help you find innovative solutions
- Conduct rapid prototyping to gather user feedback and inform design decisions
- Use iterative approaches to keep improving your design solutions

Course Methodology

- Four 90-minute online lectures on Wednesdays at 6PM PST:
  Aug 30, Sept 6, 13, and 20.
- Weekly assignments and readings
- This course will be conducted only in English

Price
- Students: $100
- UXPA Members: $400
- Non-members: $700

Course Contents

Lecture 1: Getting buy-in & Building empathy

- How to build stakeholder support for UCD from the beginning
- Identifying and recruiting target users
- Research methods for understanding the problem space
- Assignment: Research the problem space

Lecture 2: Ideation & Sketching

- Ideation techniques that unlock innovation
- Sketching to communicate ideas
- Rapid prototyping techniques
- Assignment: Lo-fidelity prototype

Lecture 3: Testing & Iterating

- Designing usability tests that identify strengths and opportunities for improvement
- Usability testing low fidelity prototypes with target users
- Communicating results to your team
- Iterative design and the never-ending UCD cycle
- Assignment: Iterated design based on usability study results

Lecture 4: Advocating for user-centered design

- Review of student projects
- Leaving a legacy of UCD with your stakeholders
- Assignment: (Due 1 week after class) High fidelity prototype

Presenter

Rebecca Destello, Manager Research & Insights, Atlas Informatics; Affiliate Lecturer, University of Washington

Rebecca Destello leads the user research program at Atlas Informatics, a Seattle startup that's building the world's first personal search engine, Atlas Recall. Prior to Atlas, she was the Director of User Research at Anthro-Tech, a design agency in Washington State where she led several high profile user-centered design projects with government agencies.

Rebecca serves as an Affiliate Faculty member at the University of Washington's Human Centered Design & Engineering (HCDE) department where she has been teaching graduate students in user-centered design, design thinking, usability testing, and web design since 2012.

Rebecca received her Master's Degree in Human Centered Design & Engineering (HCDE) at the University of Washington in 2011. Prior to that, she received a BA in Interdisciplinary Visual Arts, with a focus on design, printmaking, and art history, also from the University of Washington.