

ART 311 — INTRODUCTION TO UX DESIGN

Fall 2026

East Texas A&M University

Instructor: Brian Harrison

Class: Tuesdays | 6:30–10:30 PM

Format: Lecture + Discussion + Workshop + Studio

Semester Length: 16 Classes

COURSE OVERVIEW

Introduction to UX Design introduces students to the foundations, methods, tools, and practices used to create useful and effective digital experiences.

Students will learn UX by doing UX.

Rather than focusing exclusively on theory, the course combines UX principles with hands-on research, design, prototyping, testing, and implementation. Students will learn how designers understand users and problems before creating solutions and how those solutions evolve from ideas into working digital experiences.

Throughout the semester, students will work through a recurring process:

Understand → Research → Plan → Design → Prototype → Build → Test → Improve

Three platforms will support this process:

FIGJAM — UNDERSTAND & PLAN

Students will use FigJam for:

- Research
- Competitive analysis
- Brainstorming
- Affinity mapping
- Personas
- Customer journeys
- Sitemaps
- User flows
- Component research

FIGMA — DESIGN & PROTOTYPE

Students will use Figma for:

- Wireframes
- User interfaces
- Components
- Responsive design

- Interactive prototypes
- Design iteration
- Usability testing
- Project presentations

GOHIGHLEVEL — BUILD & EXECUTE

Students will use GoHighLevel to translate planned experiences into working digital experiences, including:

- Websites
- Landing pages
- Forms
- Lead capture
- Contacts / CRM
- Scheduling
- Customer communication
- Confirmation experiences
- Basic workflow automation

The relationship between these tools will be reinforced throughout the semester:

FigJam: What should happen?

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Figma: What should it look like and how should it work?

↓

GoHighLevel: Make it work.

↓

Users: Does it actually work?

Students will complete two semester projects.

Semester Project 1 — 4DWN Garden Application provides a guided introduction to the UX process.

Semester Project 2 — Small Business Digital Experience asks students to independently apply what they have learned to research, design, build, and test a complete customer experience.

COURSE PHILOSOPHY

UX design is not simply making interfaces look attractive.

UX begins with understanding people.

Students will learn to ask:

- Who is the user?
- What are they trying to accomplish?
- What problems are they experiencing?

- What information do we need before designing?
- What should the experience allow them to do?
- How should the experience work?
- Does the design make sense to actual users?
- What should be improved?

Students will be expected to explain **why** they made design decisions rather than simply showing what they created.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Explain the differences and relationships between UX, UI, CX, product design, and service experience.
 2. Identify user needs, goals, behaviors, and pain points.
 3. Conduct introductory user and competitive research.
 4. Organize and synthesize research in FigJam.
 5. Develop personas and customer/user journeys.
 6. Create problem statements based on research.
 7. Create sitemaps, task flows, and user flows.
 8. Sketch and create low-fidelity wireframes.
 9. Apply basic visual design principles including hierarchy, typography, spacing, alignment, consistency, and color.
 10. Identify and apply established UI patterns.
 11. Create reusable components in Figma.
 12. Create high-fidelity desktop and mobile interfaces.
 13. Build interactive Figma prototypes.
 14. Conduct introductory usability testing.
 15. Translate a planned Figma experience into GoHighLevel.
 16. Understand how forms, CRM, communication, scheduling, and automation affect customer experience.
 17. Test an experience from initial customer interaction through follow-up.
 18. Iterate designs based on user feedback.
 19. Present UX work as a clear story supported by research and evidence.
 20. Produce project work appropriate for future portfolio development.
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REQUIRED BOOK

The Design of Everyday Things

Don Norman

Students will read one chapter per week during the first half of the semester.

Weekly quizzes will evaluate comprehension of the assigned chapter.

Class discussions will connect concepts from the book to physical products, websites, applications, and the students' semester projects.

Reading Schedule

Week 1: Purchase book / Introduction

Week 2: Chapter 1

Week 3: Chapter 2

Week 4: Chapter 3

Week 5: Chapter 4

Week 6: Chapter 5

Week 7: Chapter 6

Week 8: Chapter 7

REQUIRED APPLICATIONS

Students will use:

- Figma
- FigJam
- GoHighLevel
- ChatGPT
- Web browser
- Smartphone for mobile testing

Additional applications may be introduced during the semester.

REQUIRED FIGMA CERTIFICATION

Students will use:

BYOL: <https://bringyourownlaptop.com/>

Semester Course: Figma UI UX Design Essentials

All weekly course work will be stored on students Figma account and will be reviewed each week for class grades.

WEEKLY COMPONENT & PATTERN LIBRARY

Students will create a personal **UX Component & Pattern Library** in FigJam.

Each week students will research a specific interface component or UX pattern and collect approximately **five examples from real digital products**.

Examples should include both desktop and mobile experiences when appropriate.

Each researched example should include:

- Screenshot
- Company or product
- Desktop / mobile designation
- Source
- Description
- What works well
- Potential usability issues
- Relevant UX principle
- Idea that could be applied to the student's project

The objective is not simply to collect screenshots.

Students should develop the ability to recognize patterns, compare solutions, evaluate usability, and make informed design decisions.

During the first half of the semester, students should also connect at least one example each week to a principle discussed in **The Design of Everyday Things**.

By the end of the semester, students will have approximately **75 researched UX examples** available as a personal design resource.

SEMESTER PROJECT 1

4DWN GARDEN APPLICATION

The first semester project provides a guided introduction to the UX process.

Students will investigate a focused experience associated with the 4DWN Garden and design a digital solution supporting that experience.

The project will introduce:

Research → Synthesis → User Flow → Wireframes → Interface Design → Prototype → Testing → Improvement

Most planning and design will occur in FigJam and Figma.

Students will also implement a focused portion of the experience in GoHighLevel so they begin understanding the relationship between a prototype and an operational customer experience.

Final Project 1 Deliverables

- Research
- Competitive examples
- Research synthesis
- Persona / user definition
- Problem statement
- User flow
- Wireframes
- Figma interface
- Interactive prototype

- Usability testing
 - Revised design
 - Focused GoHighLevel experience
 - Final presentation
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SEMESTER PROJECT 2

SMALL BUSINESS DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

Students will create a fictional service business in one of three categories:

House Cleaning

Pet Sitting

Lawn Maintenance

Students will research the industry and its customers before designing the experience.

The final experience will progress from:

Research

↓

Customer Journey

↓

Information Architecture

↓

Wireframes

↓

Figma Interface

↓

Figma Prototype

↓

GoHighLevel Website

↓

Lead / Service Request

↓

Customer Communication

↓

Testing

↓

Iteration

Final Project 2 Deliverables

- Business concept
 - Target customer
 - Competitive research
 - Value proposition
 - Customer journey
 - Sitemap
 - User flow
 - Wireframes
 - Figma component library
 - Desktop interface
 - Mobile interface
 - Interactive prototype
 - GoHighLevel website
 - Lead/service request form
 - CRM/contact capture
 - Confirmation experience
 - Customer follow-up
 - Basic automation
 - Voice AI
 - SMS Notifications
 - Calendar Booking
 - Usability testing
 - Design revisions
 - Final presentation
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WEEKLY CLASS FORMAT

A typical four-hour class will follow approximately:

6:30–6:45 | Book Quiz

6:45–7:05 | Book / Component Discussion

7:05–7:40 | UX Topic

7:40–8:20 | Tool Demonstration

8:20–8:35 | Break

8:35–9:35 | Guided Lab

9:35–10:15 | Semester Project Studio

10:15–10:30 | Critique / Assignment Review

After the book is completed, quiz and discussion time may transition to project critique, UX case studies, component discussions, and additional studio time.

WEEK 1

WHAT IS UX?

UX Foundation

- What is User Experience?
- UX vs. UI vs. CX
- What does a UX designer do?
- UX roles and careers
- Users, goals, tasks, and friction
- Good experiences vs. bad experiences
- Introduction to the semester

Class Exercise

Purchase an Airline Ticket

Students examine the experience of purchasing an airline ticket and identify:

- User goal
- Required information
- Decisions
- Friction
- Potential improvements

FigJam / Figma

Introduction to the Figma environment.

Students learn:

- Files
- Pages
- Frames
- Basic shapes
- Text
- Images
- FigJam
- Stickies
- Basic organization

GoHighLevel

Platform orientation.

Students explore:

- Sites
- Contacts
- Conversations
- Opportunities

- Automations

The goal is exploration—not mastery.

WEEKLY ASSIGNMENT

1. **Component** Library – Navigation
 2. **Book** - Purchase *The Design of Everyday Things*.
 3. **Supplies** - Pouch, Assorted Dry Erase Markers, Composition Book, Painters Tape, Sharpie Markers, Sticky Notes (Red, Yellow and Green)
 4. **Figma** – BYOL: Figma Kickstart Tutorial for Beginners + Figma UI UX Design Essentials: Section 1 – Getting Started
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WEEK 2

USERS, NEEDS & EXPERIENCES

UX Foundation

- Understanding users
- User goals
- Needs vs. wants
- Pain points
- Touchpoints
- Introduction to journey mapping

Class Exercise

Pizza Ordering Experience

Students map the experience of ordering pizza from initial need through receiving the order.

FigJam / Figma

- Journey mapping
- Organizing information
- Screenshots
- Basic frames
- Basic screen creation

GoHighLevel

Students learn to:

- Open a website/funnel
- Understand page structure
- Edit text
- Edit images
- Edit buttons
- Preview desktop/mobile

Component

Headers / Hero Sections

Book Quiz

Chapter 1

Weekly Assignment

Create a Pizza Customer Journey in FigJam.

Create one proposed screen in Figma.

Build a simple landing page in GoHighLevel.

Complete Component Library research.

WEEK 3

RESEARCH

UX Foundation

- Why designers research
- User interviews
- Research questions
- Observation
- Secondary research
- Competitive research
- Research vs. assumptions

FigJam

Students learn:

- Research boards
- Organizing screenshots
- Competitive comparisons
- Stickies
- Grouping information

GoHighLevel

Page construction:

- Sections
- Rows
- Columns
- Content
- Mobile responsiveness

Component

Footers

Chapter 2

Semester Project 1

Introduce **4DWN Garden Application**.

Weekly Assignment

Research the 4DWN experience.

Conduct assigned user/competitive research.

Document findings in FigJam.

Recreate one researched page section in both Figma and GoHighLevel.

WEEK 4

MAKING SENSE OF RESEARCH

UX Foundation

- Research synthesis
- Observations vs. insights
- Patterns
- Affinity mapping
- User needs
- Pain points
- Personas
- Problem statements

FigJam

Create:

- Affinity map
- Research themes
- Persona/user definition
- Problem statement

GoHighLevel

Introduction to:

- Forms
- Form fields
- Required information
- Contacts
- Submission experience

Component

Forms

[Book Quiz](#)

Chapter 3

[Project Assignment](#)

4DWN research synthesis.

Define the primary user and problem.

Create and test a basic GoHighLevel form.

WEEK 5

FROM PROBLEMS TO IDEAS

UX Foundation

- Ideation
- Brainstorming
- User stories
- Feature ideas
- Prioritization
- Task flows
- User flows
- Sketching

[FigJam / Figma](#)

Create:

- User flow
- Initial sketches
- Low-fidelity screens

[GoHighLevel](#)

- Pages
- Navigation
- Website structure
- Connecting pages

[Component](#)

Cards

[Book Quiz](#)

Chapter 4

[Project Assignment](#)

4DWN:

Create primary user flow.

Create sitemap/experience structure.

Create initial low-fidelity screens.

WEEK 6

WIREFRAMES + UI FUNDAMENTALS

UX Foundation

- Wireframes
- Visual hierarchy
- Typography
- Spacing
- Alignment
- Color
- Consistency
- Accessibility basics

Figma

- Auto Layout
- Components
- Reusable elements
- Styles
- Converting wireframes into UI

GoHighLevel

Figma → GHL Exercise

Students reproduce an approved Figma section inside GoHighLevel.

Discussion:

What translated easily?

What did not?

What changed during implementation?

Component

Search

Book Quiz

Chapter 5

Project Assignment

4DWN:

Create Figma wireframes.

Develop initial components.

Create high-fidelity screens.

Implement one approved section in GoHighLevel.

WEEK 7

PROTOTYPE + TEST

UX Foundation

- What is a prototype?
- Why prototype?
- Usability testing
- Writing test tasks
- Finding participants
- Observing behavior
- Asking questions without leading
- Identifying usability problems

Figma

- Prototype connections
- Interactions
- Clickable flows
- Prototype testing

GoHighLevel

- Forms
- Confirmation behavior
- Customer information
- Testing submissions

Component

Buttons / Calls to Action

Book Quiz

Chapter 6

Project Assignment

Create complete 4DWN Figma prototype.

Conduct usability testing.

Build the focused 4DWN form/interest experience in GoHighLevel.

Document findings.

WEEK 8

PROJECT 1 — TEST, IMPROVE & PRESENT

UX Foundation

- Iteration
- Prioritizing usability issues
- Communicating UX decisions
- Telling the project story

Figma

Revise designs based on usability testing.

GoHighLevel

Test the implemented experience from beginning to end.

Component

Mobile Navigation

Book Quiz

Chapter 7

PROJECT 1 FINAL

Students present:

Problem → Research → Findings → User → Flow → Design → Prototype → Testing → Improvements

Demonstrate the focused GoHighLevel experience.

Introduce Semester Project 2

Students select:

House Cleaning | Pet Sitting | Lawn Maintenance

WEEK 9

UX + BUSINESS

UX Foundation

- UX and business goals
- Target customers
- Customer problems
- Value propositions
- Competitive positioning
- Trust
- Credibility

FigJam

Create:

- Competitive research board
- Customer profile
- Business concept
- Initial visual direction

GoHighLevel

Create the Project 2 environment.

Establish site structure.

Component

Error & Validation States

Project Assignment

Choose business category.

Create business name and concept.

Research at least three competitors.

Define target customer.

Define customer problem.

Create value proposition.

WEEK 10

CUSTOMER JOURNEY

UX Foundation

Students examine the complete service experience:

Need → Search → Discover → Evaluate → Trust → Select → Contact/Book → Confirmation → Service → Follow-Up → Review → Repeat

FigJam

Create the complete customer journey.

Identify:

- Goals
- Questions
- Touchpoints
- Pain points
- Trust needs
- Opportunities

GoHighLevel

Students identify where technology supports the journey:

- Website
- Forms
- CRM
- Scheduling
- SMS
- Email
- Workflows

Component

Pricing / Service Selection

Project Assignment

Complete customer journey.

Identify at least:

3 friction points

3 opportunities

Identify potential GoHighLevel touchpoints.

WEEK 11

INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE + WEBSITE UX

UX Foundation

- Information architecture
- Sitemaps
- Navigation
- Content hierarchy
- Mobile-first thinking
- Calls to action
- Conversion

FigJam / Figma

Create:

- Sitemap
- Primary user flow
- Desktop wireframes
- Mobile wireframes

GoHighLevel

Create:

- Pages
- Navigation
- Basic page structure
- Mobile structure

Component

Reviews / Social Proof

Project Assignment

Complete sitemap.

Complete primary customer flow.

Complete desktop/mobile wireframes.

Create GoHighLevel site skeleton.

WEEK 12

HIGH-FIDELITY DESIGN

UX Foundation

- Visual hierarchy
- Consistency
- Responsive design
- Design systems
- Interface patterns

Figma

- Components
- Auto Layout
- Typography
- Buttons
- Form controls
- Desktop/mobile layouts
- High-fidelity UI
- Prototype

GoHighLevel

Begin translating the approved Figma experience into the working site.

Component

Scheduling / Calendars

Project Assignment

Complete high-fidelity:

- Homepage
- Primary service experience

- Mobile designs
- Component set

Begin GoHighLevel implementation.

WEEK 13

LEAD CAPTURE + CRM

UX Foundation

- Forms as experiences
- Form friction
- Progressive disclosure
- Validation
- Error prevention
- Customer expectations

Figma

Design:

- Contact/service request
- Form states
- Error states
- Confirmation state

GoHighLevel

Create:

- Form
- Required fields
- Contact record
- Service request
- CRM capture
- Confirmation

Component

Lead Capture / Contact Forms

Project Assignment

Create functioning:

Website → CTA → Form → Submission → Contact → Confirmation

Test the entire flow.

WEEK 14

CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION + AUTOMATION

UX Foundation

A customer clicks **Submit**.

What happens next?

Students examine:

- Feedback
- Confirmation
- Expectations
- Email
- SMS
- Follow-up
- Service communication
- Automation
- Responsible AI opportunities

Figma

Design communication states and confirmation experiences.

GoHighLevel

Introduction to workflows:

Trigger → Condition → Action → Communication

Students build a basic follow-up experience.

Component

Confirmation / Success States

Project Assignment

Create:

Form Submission → Confirmation → CRM → Customer Communication → Follow-Up

Document the workflow.

WEEK 15

TEST THE COMPLETE EXPERIENCE

UX Foundation

- End-to-end usability
- Testing websites
- Testing mobile

- Testing customer journeys
- Identifying friction
- Prioritizing improvements

Usability Exercise

Another participant attempts to:

Discover Business

↓

Understand Services

↓

Evaluate Trust

↓

Select Service

↓

Complete Request

↓

Receive Confirmation

↓

Experience Follow-Up

Figma

Compare planned experience against actual implementation.

GoHighLevel

Test the live experience.

Component

Customer Communication / Follow-Up

Project Assignment

Conduct **3–5 usability tests**.

Document:

- Observations
- Problems
- Successes
- Participant comments
- Prioritized changes

Revise Figma and GoHighLevel experiences.

Prepare final presentation.

WEEK 16

FINAL PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

SEMESTER PROJECT 2

SMALL BUSINESS DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

Students present the complete project story:

BUSINESS



CUSTOMER



PROBLEM



RESEARCH



CUSTOMER JOURNEY



UX STRATEGY



WIREFRAMES



FIGMA DESIGN



PROTOTYPE



GOHIGHLEVEL EXPERIENCE



CUSTOMER COMMUNICATION



USABILITY TESTING



IMPROVEMENTS



FINAL EXPERIENCE

Students demonstrate the functioning GoHighLevel experience during their presentation.

FINAL SEMESTER DELIVERABLES

At the conclusion of the course, each student should leave with three bodies of work:

1. UX COMPONENT & PATTERN LIBRARY

Approximately 75 researched examples organized in FigJam.

2. 4DWN GARDEN APPLICATION

A guided UX project demonstrating:

Research → Planning → Figma → Prototype → Testing → Focused Implementation

3. SMALL BUSINESS DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

An independently developed project demonstrating:

Research → Customer Journey → Figma → Prototype → GoHighLevel → Customer Communication → Testing → Iteration

Together, these projects demonstrate that the student understands not only how to create an interface, but how to move from an identified customer problem to a planned, designed, implemented, and tested digital experience.

CORE COURSE PRINCIPLE

PLAN BEFORE YOU BUILD.

Students should not begin building the final experience in GoHighLevel without first establishing the experience in FigJam and Figma.

FigJam asks:

What should happen?

Figma asks:

What should it look like and how should it work?

GoHighLevel asks:

How do we make it work?

Usability testing asks:

Does it work for the customer?

The goal of the semester is for students to understand and experience all four.