

Spring 2026 ITLS-3120-IO1 Syllabus

ITLS 3120 Design Processes and Perspectives II Syllabus

Course Description

This course covers an introduction to advanced issues in and critical perspectives of design. Students establish their own design philosophy by developing design practices and applying course material.

Update for 2026: AI can generate screens in seconds, but it cannot generate strategy. Because the tools are changing, this course focuses on design abilities, such as navigating ambiguity, synthesizing information, and communicating deliberately, that are necessary to succeed in a professional career.

Course Overview

Design is not neutral. Whether designing products, services, processes, or spaces, we are designing experiences which are embedded with our own biases, perspectives, beliefs, and values. In this class, we will consider the inherent power designers have to control the way in which people experience the world. We will explore how we can steward that power in a way that aligns with our own values and beliefs. The goal is for you to develop an understanding of your own design perspective. Your thinking over the semester will culminate in two outputs:

- a design project of a particular problem;
 - your own design perspective that will anchor your future design endeavors.
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Instructor

Jody Clarke-Midura (you can call me Dr. Clarke or Professor Clarke)

Office Hours: By appointment (email me to set up a meeting in person if you're in Logan or virtually).

Note on Communication: I am available via email and meetings to chat through any issues you may have throughout the semester. During the week (Monday-Friday), I will respond to your emails within 24 hours, except for holidays. If you attempt to reach me after 5pm on Friday, you can expect a response by 12pm on Monday. While I will typically respond quicker than these timeframes, please plan accordingly. If I don't respond within this timeframe, please follow up with me via email.

Course Learning Outcomes

This course focuses on 'durable skills': critical thinking, ethical problem-solving, and effective communication within a design context. We apply these skills to help you master the habits and reasoning required of an effective designer.

By the end of this semester, you will achieve the following objectives, aligned with the IDEA Student Ratings of Instruction:

Course Learning Outcomes	IDEA Learning Objective
Identify and explain the ways in which design decisions shape human behavior and experience.	IDEA Objective 1: Gaining a basic understanding of the subject. IDEA 11: Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.
Apply user-centered design principles to specific problems through a semester-long Redesign Project.	IDEA 3: Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions). IDEA 4: Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course.
Utilize iterative prototyping and user testing data to refine and improve design solutions.	IDEA 3: Learning to apply course material. IDEA 4: Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals.
Evaluate the work of peers constructively by analyzing how their design choices align with stated user needs and ethical considerations.	IDEA 4: Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals. IDEA 11: Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.

Course Learning Outcomes aligned with IDEA Objectives

Rhythm of the Course

During this semester, you will learn the design process by taking a project from initial concept to final iteration. Key steps (separated into different week assignments) include problem identification, affinity mapping, wireframing, prototyping iteratively, and user testing. Your work will be compiled into a final design

document that organizes and showcases your progress throughout the semester.

Each week follows a consistent rhythm centered on a specific topic and 1-2 guiding questions. To explore these concepts, we follow a three-part sequence: Think, Design, Discuss, where each task builds directly on the last. You should plan to spend approximately 9 hours per week completing this cycle.

Task 1: Thinking Materials

Read: 1-2 articles or blog posts (30-90 minutes).

Watch or Listen: 1-2 videos or podcasts (30-90 minutes).

Explore: Resources.

Task 2: Design Application

Apply concepts from Task 1 to a design task or challenge (1-3 hours).

Task 3: Share and Discuss

Synthesize your learning by engaging in the class discussion. Respond to a minimum of two peer's posts per week (2-3 hours).

Canvas as our Course Communication Platform

You will need to use Canvas extensively in this course, and will be expected to stay connected and up-to-date with that system. All due dates will be kept current in Canvas.

Canvas announcements are the main way with which the instructor will communicate with you. Set your notifications accordingly. You will miss critical and helpful information if you don't check the announcements.

Participation in the Class

Although this course is delivered online via Canvas, it is not a passive experience. The activities are designed to reflect the collaborative nature of the profession, which means your participation is essential. Being successful in this class requires the same skills as success in the design profession: active, empathetic, and generous listening.

Listening is a design skill. It is key to understanding user needs, client goals, and project constraints. This requires asking questions and listening deeply. In this class, we practice this skill through peer feedback and discussion.

We want this to be a safe space to learn how to do this effectively. We are all on this journey together, building a community where we welcome a range of opinions. We want to encourage deeper thinking, not just surface-level agreement. To do this, we will practice generous listening, listening to understand rather than just waiting for your turn to respond. This allows us to question ideas constructively while respecting the person sharing them.

Note: All course materials will be available via Canvas.

Course Schedule

The course allows you to gain practice with the design process that you were introduced to in Design Perspectives & Processes I, with opportunities to dive deeper into user testing and prototyping. You will also learn and apply inclusive design perspectives throughout the course.

Week	Start Date	Topic	Discussion Assignments (15 points)	Design Assignment (20 points)
1	Jan 5	Recognizing Exclusion	Introductions (15) Design Perspective Part 1 (15)	The Mismatch Audit: Identify 3 levels of exclusion (Permanent, Temporary, Situational) in a single task.
2	Jan 12	Heuristic Evaluation	Discuss Design Activity	Heuristic Audit: Annotate 3 screenshots using the Nielsen 10 framework to find friction.
3	Jan 19	Ethical UI: Decoding Manipulation	Discuss Design Activity	Dark Pattern Autopsy: Use Lens A (Heuristics) or B (Mismatches) to deconstruct a deceptive interface.
4	Jan 26	Discovery & Ambiguity	Share & Discuss Final project topics	Discovery Log: Identify 3 potential project apps and the specific "Friction Point" in each.
5	Feb 2			The 1-Page Proposal: Define your final project strategy and your Anti-Persona.

Week	Start Date	Topic	Discussion Assignments (15 points)	Design Assignment (20 points)
6	Feb 9	IA & User Flows	Discuss Design Activity	The Sticky Note Flow: A hand-drawn map of the "Current" vs. "Proposed" user journey.
7	Feb 16	Visual Systems	Discuss Design Activity	Lo-Fi Wireframes: 3–5 structural sketches of your key project screens.
8	Feb 23	Interaction Design	Discuss Design Activity	Clickable Prototype: Link your 5 key screens together in Figma for a functional "Happy Path."
9	March 2	Stress Testing (Lab)	Try to "break" a peer's prototype. Post the specific failure point.	Lab Week: No deliverable. Focus on fixing your prototype based on peer feedback.
10	March 9	SPRING BREAK	—	—
11	March 16	Testing & Synthesis	Discuss Design Activity	Create a bulleted list of 3 specific changes you made based on Week 9 testing.
12	March 23	Iterative Design: Polish	Discuss Design Activity	Hi-Fi Screens: The final 5 project screens, polished, high-contrast, and accessible.
13	March 30	Design Perspective		Work on final project
14	April 6	Strategic Presentation	Discuss Design Activity	Video presentation

Week	Start Date	Topic	Discussion Assignments (15 points)	Design Assignment (20 points)
15	April 13	Final Case Study Due		Final Redesign Project (100 pts): The PDF Case Study documenting your entire process.

AI Use Policy For This Course

You are permitted to use ChatGPT and other AI tools to assist you in ideating, writing drafts, and revising your writing. However, you are expected to include a disclosure statement at the end of your assignment describing which AI tool you used and how you used it. For example, you should state:

(1) "ChatGPT was used to draft about 30 percent of this paper and to provide revision assistance. AI-produced content was edited for accuracy and style." and;

(2) include an Appendix for the prompts you used and the AI's responses in your submission.

Evaluation Methods and Criteria

You have two main outputs (design perspective and design portfolio) in this course. You will have several discussions and assignments to work toward those outputs. Here's the summary breakdown:

Activity/Assignment	Points
Weekly Discussion and Peer Reviews of Design Assignments	180
Design Assignments	220
Final Project	100
Total Possible Points	500

Grading Policy

The following grading standards will be used in this class:

Grading Scheme

Grade

Range

A	100 % to 93.0%
A-	< 93.0 % to 90.0%
B+	< 90.0 % to 87.0%
B	< 87.0 % to 83.0%
B-	< 83.0 % to 80.0%
C+	< 80.0 % to 77.0%
C	< 77.0 % to 73.0%
C-	< 73.0 % to 70.0%
D+	< 70.0 % to 67.0%
D	< 67.0 % to 60.0%
F	< 59.0 % to 0.0%

Late Assignment Policy

Because this course is centered around participation and engagement of shared experience, the timing of assignments is critical to their value. That being said, I realize that we are human and life happens. Thus, you will receive two "free passes" at the start of the course. A "free pass" allows you to opt out of responding to your peer's discussion posts or request up to a 48 hour extension on a design assignment. You must notify the instructor via email or Canvas message if you wish to do this at any time before the assignment due date. You can only have one extension per assignment.

Beyond the assignment passes, late work is handled on a case-by-case basis and is accepted at the instructor's discretion. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you are having trouble with an assignment or keeping up with the class. I am here to support your learning so please let me know if there is anything you need.

Online Course Fee

A fee of \$15 per credit is applied to all online courses to sustain current digital technologies and support services required for engaging and effective online learning.