# This is a logo of Emerging Media program at Loyola University Maryland.

# ME720: User Experience (Fall 2019)

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## Course Goal:

The overall goal that you are expected to accomplish by the end of this semester is to *understand* the significance of user-centered design process and to *learn how to implement* a user-centered design plan with a continuous goal of offering better user experience (UX).

##

## Course Description:

Reviews the latest theories and research methods developed to better understand how and why people use new media technologies. Students cover a diverse range of perspectives on how users come to identify and make meaning from media, individual motivations and behavior, and the role of user communities. Students then create user-centered design prototype or content and conduct UX study on them following UX research methods, such as usability studies, focus groups, interviews, and/or web-based surveys.

##

## Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

* Define the concept of user experience, including articulating different perspectives.
* Share and explain theories and perspectives that are relevant to our understanding of the user experience and apply them to a particular product/project.
* Understand the basics of human-centered design and its role in research and improving the user experience.
* Demonstrate a greater understanding and appreciation of the user experience by becoming more mindful of their own and others’ experiences as users of new media.
* Create and implement a user-centered design plan from discovery/ideation stage to testing.

## Course Materials:

All the readings, tutorials and videos will be posted to the class Moodle site, so make sure you can access it quite frequently. Look for new course materials and announcements. All the materials for a module will be posted for before its start date. It means if a module is scheduled to begin on September 3rd then all the readings/videos and assignments/activities for that module will be posted before September 3rd.

Additionally, you are expected to read following two must-read books[[1]](#footnote-1) to gain some seminal and proven perspectives on user experience and design process:

* *The Design of Everyday Things.* Don Norman. 2013. Basic Books.
* *Hooked: How to build habit-forming products.* Nir Eyal. 2014. Portfolio.

## How Do I Take This Course?

This is an asynchronous online course in which you will be required to do the assigned online readings as well as view online videos. You will interact with the instructor and students in the course through written and VoiceThread discussions as well as commenting on the activities completed by your colleagues in the class.

The course does not have a regularly scheduled meeting time, and you are expected to do your work on a regular/routine basis, based on the schedule provided. This is a graduate level course that requires self-discipline. **You should check into the course, perhaps on a daily basis. The amount of time you spend on the course system is tracked and can be viewed by the instructor.**

Your course grade will be based on timely completion and quality of your module and major course assignments. You should log into the course Moodle site early to make sure that you are able to do so. If you have any problems in access Moodle or university-issued software, please contact the Loyola University help desk (410) 671-5555 and/or send an email to Erin Richardson (erichardson@loyola.edu), the program operations officer.

## Computer Requirements:

To complete the course, you will need a computer with a high-speed Internet connection and a Web browser. You will need access to Microsoft Word or be able to convert to Word from another word processing software such as Apple Pages. You will benefit from having a webcam, which usually come pre-installed on most newer PC’s and Macs. If it not the case, then you can purchase one for under $20 as an add-on if you wish. You should also have Adobe Reader on your computer. This program can be downloaded for free from [Adobe’s website](https://www.adobe.com).

##

## Software:

You will be expected to use either of these software for app prototyping – Adobe XD, MarvelApp or InVision. Tutorials on how to use these software will be available in “**Wireframing and Prototyping**” module.

Our class has partnered with UserTesting.Com for testing of your content/design such as app prototype, video, landing page/webpage, eNewsletter and the such. Information on how to conduct the test will be available in “**Testing, Interpreting and Evaluating**” module.

Since, in your final project, you will be expected to create a user-centered content or a design utilizing an application/software of your choice, make sure that you will have access to that particular software to work on your final project.

## Virtual Office Hours:

Wednesday: 2 – 4 p.m. EST via this [Zoom Meeting Link](https://loyola.zoom.us/j/9127454874) or by appointment.

If I need to cancel or reschedule these office hours, I will let the class know in advance. Moreover, I will be available through Skype or Zoom for drop-in video or audio calling by appointment. Feel free to email me and schedule time if you’d like to Skype or Zoom at any point during this semester.

Over the course of fall semester (beginning from September 3rd), I will make myself as available to you as I can. **Email is the best and most efficient way to contact me** as I check it regularly during the week and sometimes over the weekend. I may not be able to quickly respond to email over the weekend, or in the evening. I will try to reply within 24 hours at most, and if you don’t hear back from me in that time period, feel free to text me about your email. When you text me, make sure to first introduce yourself.

## Honor Code:

The Honor Code states that all students of the Loyola Community have been equally entrusted by their peers to conduct themselves honestly on all academic assignments and tests. The students of this College understand that having collective and individual responsibility for the ethical welfare of their peers exemplifies a commitment to the community. Students who submit materials that are the products of their own mind demonstrate respect for themselves and the community in which they study. All outside resources or information should be clearly acknowledged. If there is any doubt or question regarding the use and documentation of outside sources for academic assignments, your instructor should be consulted. The student is referred to the Undergraduate Catalogue and/or Student Handbook for more information and further clarification of the honor code standards, types of violations, due process and sanctions that may be imposed.

Department of Communication policy reiterates that the university honor code applies to all courses, including this one. I will follow the Department of Communications’ policy guidelines for honor code violations if any infraction of the code occurs. The department’s policy is available upon request.

## Disability Support:

Students with Disabilities: To request academic accommodations due to a disability, please email Disability Support Services (DSS), Newman Towers West 107, or call 410-617-2750/2062. If you already registered with DSS and requested an accommodations letter (and DSS has sent the letter to your professors via email), please schedule a brief meeting to discuss the accommodations you might need in this class Please email Marcia Wiedefeld, Director of DSS, or call 410-617-2062.

## Grading & Assignments:

Grading will be based on quality and timely completion of two types of assignments – module assignments and course assignments.

**Module Activities & Assignments (120 points):** One of the primary objectives of these Moodle assignments is to encourage students to interact and learn from each other through reading/video-based nuanced engagement and to apply what they have learned. Therefore, you will be expected to participate and complete various types of activities – discussion forum participation, VoiceThread presentation, reading/lecture-based activity sheet completion, phase-by-phase learning activities, and tutorial completion.

Your timely participation in these assignments is critical. You will receive feedbacks on your module assignments from me during the course, that will tell you how you are doing, what you can improve on, expand on, etc. on assignments. As long as you are submitting on time and making a good effort in completing an activity, you are more likely to get full points in module assignments.

General guidelines on how to complete different module assignments will be posted in each module’s “**assignments**”sub-section as well as in different modules on Moodle.

**Course Assignments (80 points):** There are three deliverables for course assignments – a book report (4 – 5 pages, double-spaced), final project plan and final project. Last two items are related. Prospectus for each project will be posted to Moodle’s “**Course Overview, Syllabus & Assignments**” section.

Class Policy:

**Time management and planning:** While you will be keeping up with and completing module-specific readings and assignments, you will be expected to continue to work on your final project at your own pace. Have a plan for final project and time management for other assignments so that you can submit them on time.

**Course Technology Tutorials:** If you have already taken an Emerging Media online course, you may already know how to use VoiceThread, Blog and Discussion Forum on Moodle. In any case, I have created tutorials and shared tutorials on how to utilize different course tools for assignments and course participation purposes. All these tutorials are available in “**Tutorials and Course Resources**” section on Moodle.

**Policy on Missing Assignment or Late work:** Points will be deducted if you fail to participate in any module assignment. No more than one late work will be accepted in this course. Should you have a valid, excusable reason for not completing an assignment on time, please email the instructor in advance with proper documentation.

For final project, you can get a day extension if you do not have a record of late work/missing assignment throughout the semester.

## Distribution of Grade Points (200 points):

Module Assignments (5) : 120 points

 Module 1 (30)

 Module 2 (20)

 Module 3 (30)

 Module 4 (20)

 Module 5 (20)

Book Report : 20 points

Final Project Plan/Proposal : 10 points

Final Project : 50 points

## Course Grading Scale:

93%-100%: A
90% - 92%: A-

87% - 89%: B+
83% - 86%: B

80% - 82%: B-

77% - 79%: C+

73% - 76%: C

70% - 72%: C-

60% - 69%: D
Below 60%: F

You need to attain a grade of B- or higher to receive credit in a graduate course.

## Course Schedule:

This section includes information about module and assignment deadlines.

### Introduction (Sept. 3 – 5)

Sept. 3: Course Overview.

Sept. 5: Post your video introduction via VoiceThread comment in “Community: Introduction and Support” section of the Moodle.

### Module 1 (UX Fundamentals, Philosophies and Principles)

September 3 – 17.

Module Assignments:

* Completing an activity sheet (Deadline: September 10)
* VoiceThread Presentation: Design Evaluation (Deadline: September 17)
* HCD process/Design Thinking Strategy Paper (Deadline: September 17)

### Module 2 (App and Mobile Design Guidelines)

September 18 – 29.

Module Assignments:

* Discussion forum engagement (Deadline: September 24)
* Completing an app/mobile website analysis report (Deadline: September 29)

Course Assignment:

* Book report (Deadline: September 30).

### Module 3 (UX Research)

September 30 – October 17.

Module Assignments:

* Completing Module 3 Quiz (October 10).
* Completing Learning Activity (UX research) – Phase I (October 20).

Mid-semester break from October 18 – 20.

### Module 4 (Wireframing and Prototyping)

October 21 – November 10.

Module Assignments:

* Phase II: Idea Testing and Wireframing (November 1).
* Phase III: Final Prototype/Prototyping (November 10)

Course Assignment:

* Final Project Plan/Proposal (Deadline: October 25).

### Module 5 (Testing, Interpreting and Evaluating)

November 11 – 20.

Module Assignments:

* Web Accessibility Analysis (November 20)
* Continuation of Learning Activity – Phase IV: UserTesting and Prototype Analysis (November 20).

*Thanksgiving break November 27 – December 1.*

**Working on Final Project Draft**

November 21 – December 5

**Review of Final Project Draft**

December 2 – 10.

### Course/Final Project

Deadline: December 15.

**NOTE:** If there is a change in this syllabus, you will be notified about it via email and/or Moodle announcement.

1. These books are available in Kindle and eBook format, too, if you read books on Kindle and on the screen. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)