

# UTK INSC 439 Spring 2021 Syllabus

## COURSE INFORMATION

INSC 439 (Interfaces and Interaction Design)

University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Course Mode: Online, sync/async

Class Meetings: Mondays via Zoom (Synchronous), 6:00-6:50 PM EST; Wednesday and Friday (Asynchronous Learning Modules)

ZOOM Course ID/Link:

- Meeting ID: 979 5855 3039
- Passcode: Provided via Canvas

### Faculty Contact Information

- Mary Beth West
- Pronouns: She/her/hers
- Email: [mross15@vols.utk.edu](mailto:mross15@vols.utk.edu)
- Phone: 865.898.6178
- <https://sis.utk.edu/profile?smid=5405>
- Office Hours: By Appointment



### SIS Office Information

- 450 Communications Bldg.
- 1345 Circle Park Drive
- Knoxville, TN 37996-0341
- SIS Office: 865.974.2148
- Fax (SIS): 865.974.4667

### Welcome Statement

Welcome to Interfaces and Interaction Design! This semester, you will learn how users interact with systems and how system design can be improved. You will also apply the design concepts that we discuss in a real-world simulation.

### Course Timeline:

This class contains two instruction components: a weekly synchronous meeting on Mondays from 6:00 PM until 6:50 PM (Eastern) via Zoom, and weekly asynchronous activity(ies) taking approximately 75 minutes to complete. The first synchronous class is January 25th; our last synchronous class is April 26th. You are welcome to log in to Zoom on Mondays up to 15 minutes before class (5:45 PM), but I may be unavailable until class starts at 6:00 PM.

## COURSE INFORMATION

### Catalog Description

In this course students will learn how to combine their technical and social skills to understand how users interact with systems and how system design can be improved. Interface evaluations and prototype development using multiple tools will be covered. Understanding of the human computer interaction process will be essential in creating improved interfaces.

### Pre-requisites:

- Pre-Requisite: INSC 435

### Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Understand User Interface and GUI design concepts.
2. Understand how to use design principles to enhance the user experience.
3. Properly select and utilize design thinking processes and UX/UI tools.
4. Enumerate the important principles that underlie all good user interface design.
5. Design for diverse accessibility and test accessibility of an application.
6. Design interfaces with end users in mind.

### Course Design

This course is delivered both synchronously and asynchronously via Canvas, the university's learning management system. The class will meet synchronously on Monday evenings from 6:00 PM to 6:50 PM. All other activities throughout the week will be provided asynchronously through Canvas.

Canvas can be accessed via [utk.instructure.com](http://utk.instructure.com). Each module contains assignments, quizzes, recorded lectures, and other related video content designed to facilitate your learning of course concepts. Should you encounter any technical difficulties, please consult the Office of Information Technology's website: [oit.utk.edu](http://oit.utk.edu).

Please note that asynchronous online courses, while offering utmost flexibility and convenience for your personal schedule, require a high level of self-direction and self-discipline. It is essential that you treat this course as you would any course that meets live on specific days and at a particular time. It is suggested that you schedule regular times to view lectures and complete work for this course so that you stay on pace and do not fall behind. Your "attendance" is noted when you view the recorded class lectures on Canvas. Be aware that the instructor can see if you have viewed the recordings.

### Required Text(s)

Book 1:

The required text for this course, *About Face: The Essentials of Interaction Design* (4<sup>th</sup> Edition) by Alan Couper, Robert Reimann, David Cronin, and Christopher Noessel. This book is available

[electronically through the University Libraries](#) (you'll need to be logged in with your UTK NetID to access) but if you prefer a physical copy it can be found in UTK's bookstore or on Amazon. About Face: The Essentials of Interaction Design 4th Edition by Alan Cooper, Robert Reimann, David Cronin and Christopher Noessel [AC in Schedule]  
ISBN-10: 1118766571  
ISBN-13: 978-1118766576  
Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/About-Face-Essentials-Interaction-Design/dp/1118766571/>

Book 2:

This is another required text for this course, Don't Make me Think, Revisited: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition) by Steve Krug Norman (ISBN 978-0465050659) can be found on Amazon for either rental or purchase:  
Don't Make Me Think, Revisited: A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability (3rd Edition) by Steve Krug [SK in Schedule]  
ISBN-10: 0321965515  
ISBN-13: 978-0321965516  
Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/Dont-Make-Think-Revisited-Usability/dp/0321965515/>

## **OTHER READINGS/VIDEOS**

Additional required readings will be assigned throughout the semester and will be posted to the weekly modules in Canvas. In addition to viewing the recorded lectures, you will be required to regularly view additional videos which will be posted to Canvas in the folder for each week's session. These videos may not be listed on the course schedule below but are considered a part of the lecture for the week. They are intended to give you a mix of content versus having to watch a recorded lecture that is much longer in length. As such, viewing these videos is a requirement of the course.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Email**

This professor is required to communicate with you through your UTK email address. If you prefer to use another address, consult the [OIT Helpdesk](#) to obtain directions for forwarding your UTK email to your preferred address if you do not wish to check both accounts.

### **Instructor Availability**

[Mary Beth West](#) is available to meet via Zoom or over the phone. If you need to schedule an appointment with this professor, please email to schedule an appointment.

## **COMPUTING REQUIREMENTS AND RESOURCES**

### **Requirements**

You will need a computer with access to the Internet to participate in this course. The learning management system for this course is Canvas, which can be located at [utk.instructure.com](http://utk.instructure.com).

Lectures will be recorded and uploaded via Zoom, a video conferencing application. Assistance with Canvas and Zoom can be found by visiting the Office of Information & Technology's website: [oit.utk.edu](http://oit.utk.edu).

### **Course Resources**

- [Center for Career Development](#)
- [OIT Help Desk](#)—You may also call 865.974.9900
- [Course Catalogs](#) (Listing of academic programs, courses, and policies)
- [Hilltopics](#) (Campus and academic policies, procedures and standards of conduct)
- [Schedule of Classes/Timetable](#)
- [Student Health Center](#) (visit the site for a list of services)
- [Student Success Center](#) (Academic support resources)
- [Undergraduate Academic Advising](#) (Advising resources, course requirements, and major guides)
- [University Libraries](#) (Access to library resources, databases, course reserves, and services)
- [Center for Career Development](#) (Career counseling and resources; HIRE-A-VOL job search system)

### **Technical Support**

The Office of Information Technology (OIT) provides support and training in using various technologies for students at no charge (see: <https://oit.utk.edu/>).

## **COURSE ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICIES**

### **Learner Expectations**

Students in this course are expected to be prepared for all course activities. Students will be respectful of others, their peers, and this professor. Students should actively contribute to the learning activities of this course and abide by the UT Honor Code.

### **Instructor Expectations**

This professor will be prepared for all classes by posting weekly lectures and content. This professor will evaluate all work fairly and equitably. This professor will create and facilitate meaningful learning activities and will be respectful of all students. This professor will behave according to the University codes of conduct.

### **Attendance and Participation**

Your participation in this course, as is the case in other courses, is essential to your success. I encourage you to collaborate with your peers. If you are ever uncertain, please reach out to me via email, phone or Zoom. My job as an instructor is to facilitate your learning and help you best engage with the course material. The more effort you put into the course, the better your participation grade will be.

### **Inclement Weather**

The chancellor (or appointed representative) may officially close or suspend selected activities of the university because of extreme weather conditions. When a decision to close is made, it applies

to all classes (whether on-campus or online). The information is distributed to the campus community, shared with local media, and posted on the University homepage at <http://utk.edu>.

## ADDITIONAL POLICIES AND POINTS OF INFORMATION

### **Disability Services**

Any student who feels they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact [Student Disability Services](#) in Dunford Hall at 865-974-6087, or by video relay at 865-622-6566, to coordinate reasonable academic accommodations.

### **University Civility Statement**

Civility is genuine respect and regard for others: politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, affability, amiability and courteousness. Civility enhances academic freedom and integrity, and is a prerequisite to the free exchange of ideas and knowledge in the learning community. Our community consists of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and campus visitors. Community members affect each other's well-being and have a shared interest in creating and sustaining an environment where all community members and their points of view are valued and respected. Affirming the value of each member of the university community, the campus asks that all its members adhere to the principles of civility and community adopted by the campus. For more information, see the [UT Principles of Civility and Community](#).

### **CCI Diversity Statement**

The College of Communication and Information recognizes that a college diverse in its people, curricula, scholarship, research, and creative activities expands opportunities for intellectual inquiry and engagement, helps students develop critical thinking skills, and prepares students for social and civic responsibilities. All members of the College benefit from diversity and the quality of learning, research, scholarship and creative activities is enhanced by a climate of inclusion, understanding and appreciation of differences and the full range of human experience. As a result, the College is committed to diversity and equal opportunity and it recognizes that it must represent the diversity inherent in American society. The College is acutely aware that diversity and fairness are foundations that unite the College's faculty, staff, students, and the larger communication and information community.

### **Instructor Status as a Title IX Mandatory Reporter**

University of Tennessee faculty are committed to supporting our students and upholding gender equity laws as outlined by Title IX. Please be aware that if you choose to confide in a faculty member regarding an issue of sexual misconduct, dating violence, or stalking, we are obligated to inform the University's Title IX Coordinator, who can assist you in connecting with all possible resources both on- and off-campus. If you would like to speak with someone confidentially, the Student Counseling Center (865-974-2196) and the Student Health Center (865-974-3135) are both confidential resources. For additional resources and information, visit [titleix.utk.edu](http://titleix.utk.edu).

## ASSIGNMENTS, ASSESSMENTS, AND EVALUATIONS

### Academic Integrity

Students should be familiar with the [Hilltopics Student Handbook](#), and comply with all academic policies. This includes the University of Tennessee Honor Statement and the Academic Integrity Policy.

The Honor Statement reads: *“An essential feature of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville is a commitment to maintaining an atmosphere of intellectual integrity and academic honesty. ‘As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.’”* For more information, see the Honor Statement on the Academic Policies and Procedures page of the current [catalog](#) for student and faculty responsibilities.

The Academic Integrity policy reads: *“Study, preparation and presentation should involve at all times the student’s own work, unless it has been clearly specified that work is to be a team effort. Academic honesty requires that the student present his or her own work in all academic projects, including tests, papers, homework, and class presentation. When incorporating the work of other scholars and writers into a project, the student must accurately cite the source of that work.”* For additional information, see the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

### Plagiarism

Plagiarism in any of its forms is intolerable, and attention to matters of documentation in all written work is expected and required. Inadvertence, alleged lack of understanding, or avowed ignorance of the various types of plagiarism are not acceptable excuses.

*Specific examples of plagiarism are:*

1. Copying without proper documentation (quotation marks and a citation) written or spoken words, phrases, or sentences from any source.
2. Summarizing without proper documentation (usually a citation) ideas from another source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge).
3. Borrowing facts, statistics, graphs, pictorial representations, or phrases without acknowledging the source (unless such information is recognized as common knowledge).
4. Collaborating on a graded assignment without the instructor’s approval.
5. Submitting work, either in whole or in part, created by a professional service and used without attribution (e.g., paper, speech, bibliography, or photograph).

Students who may be unsure of the nature of plagiarism should consult the instructor or a guide for writing research reports. Resources are available through the University Libraries, including a [Citing Sources guide](#).

Infractions of academic integrity are penalized according to the severity of the infraction but may include a course grade of "F."

### Assignments

This table provides a brief summary of assignment by name, due date, point value and percentage of final grade. A brief description of each assignment follows the table.

Assignment	Point Value	Percentage of Final Grade	Due Date
Assignment 1: Good Design vs Bad Design	10	10%	2/10/2021
Assignment 2: User Personas	10	10%	3/3/2021
Assignment 3: Information Design Flow	10	10%	3/24/2021
Presentation to Class	10	10%	4/26/2021
Assignment 4: Visual Redesign	10	10%	4/28/2021
Weekly Journal (8 out of 10 Required)	40	40%	Ongoing
Participation	5	5%	Ongoing
Attendance	5	5%	Ongoing
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	

**\*\*Note:** All assignments are due on the day posted by 11:59pm\*\*.

### **User-Centered Design Project**

This term, you will work to improve an existing application or website or design a new user-centered interface. To make this happen, you will complete the following tasks:

- Identify an existing application or website in need of improvement, or brainstorm a new interface.
- Conduct research with current or prospective users.
- Develop a prototype of the redesigned or new interface.
- Evaluate your design.
- Present your final design to your colleagues.

Because this course is hands-on, each team member is expected to be involved and make substantial contributions throughout the design process. Therefore, communication and dedication are essential to your success.

### **Journal Entries (8 Required)**

During the term, students will reflect on their learning experiences in a series of journal entries. Although there are 10 journal entries, students are only responsible for completing 8 entries. These journal entries are private and will not be shared with anyone else.

### **Participation**

It is important to note that class participation is five percent of your grade because participation is an important component of facilitating learning in this class. Half the participation points come from both quantity and quality of discussions both in-class and in Canvas activities.

## **Class Attendance Policy**

It is assumed that each student will miss no more than one session and will speak in class -- the equivalent of a "B" grade for "participation." Missing more classes or failing to participate will lower your grade; frequent participation will raise the grade.

Regular attendance is required and necessary. A substantial portion of your grade will be based on in-class work and participation. Unexplained absences will affect your grade. Contact me as soon as possible if you cannot attend class. If you must be absent from class, you must:

- Inform me in advance or as soon as possible after class.
- Submit any work due from the missed class period.
- Obtain notes, handouts, and so forth from Canvas

Acceptable reasons for absence from class include:

- Illness
- Serious family emergencies,
- Military obligation,
- Severe weather conditions,
- Religious holidays and
- Obligations for court imposed legal obligations (i.e., jury duty, subpoena)
- Other reasons may also be approved.

Missing more than one class meeting for reasons other than those listed above will have a negative impact on your course participation grade.

## **Preparing Assignments**

Student work is assigned a grade based on quality of thought and writing style, thoroughness of research and of references, appropriateness of length, and originality. Only exceptional work will receive an "A" grade.

- Please use either APA or CMS citation styles.
- All sources must be cited; quotations must be formatted and attributed correctly. Not doing so constitutes plagiarism.
- Grades for assignment submissions that include incomplete in-text citations or reference lists will be lowered by one-half grade level (e.g., an assignment that would have received 17/20, or an 85/100: B, will be lowered to 16/20, 80/100: B-).
- All assignments must comply with the submission specifications provided in the submission requirements (i.e., submit via Canvas in the specified file formats).

## **Submitting Assignments**

Assignments should be submitted to the "assignments" area of Canvas and are due on/by 11:59 p.m. EST/EDT on the due date listed on the syllabus, unless otherwise noted on the syllabus (such as for your final exam). I will download the submissions from Canvas early the next morning. **I will ONLY download assignments from Canvas ONCE.** Therefore, if your assignment is not submitted by the deadline,

- You must send me an email informing me that your assignment will be late. **Not doing so will result in a one-point deduction for each day I don't hear from you.**
- When it's ready, you must submit it to me via email, as an attachment
- One point will be deducted for each 24-hour hour period the assignment is not turned in.

### Assigning Grades

Please note that this professor does not assign letter grades for individual assignments, but will mark your paper with my comments and provide a point score. If you'd like to compute a letter grade based on the score provided, divide your score by the total points possible for the assignment. For example, if you earned 23 out of 25 points on an assignment, your percentage grade would be 92. Your final semester grade will be based on total points earned/total possible points over the course of the semester.

### Grading Scale

Semester grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

A	93-100	Superior performance (4 quality points)
A-	90-92.99	Intermediate superior performance (3.7 quality points)
B+	88-89.99	Very good performance (3.3 quality points)
B	83-87.99	Good performance (3.0 quality points)
B-	80-82.99	Intermediate good performance (2.7 quality points)
C+	78-79.99	Fair performance (2.3 quality points)
C	73-77.99	Satisfactory performance (2.0 quality points)
C -	70-72.99	Unsatisfactory performance (1.7 quality points)
D+	68-69.99	Unsatisfactory performance (1.3 quality points)
D	63-67.99	Unsatisfactory performance (1.0 quality points)
D -	60-62.99	Unsatisfactory performance (0.7 quality points)
F	0-59.99	Failure performance (0.0 quality points)
S		Satisfactory; only assigned for C or better work when a course is taken on a S/NC grading basis. Carries no point value.
NC		No Credit; indicates failure to complete a course satisfactorily, and is only assigned for C- or worse work when a course is taken on a S/NC grading basis. Carries no point value.
I		Under extraordinary circumstances and at the discretion of the instructor, the grade of I (Incomplete) may be awarded to students who have satisfactorily completed a substantial portion of the course but cannot complete the course for reasons beyond their control. An I carries no quality points. If the I grade is not removed within one calendar year or upon graduation, it shall be changed to an F and count as a failure in the computation of the grade point average.
W		Indicates student has officially withdrawn from the course or the university. Carries no point value.

### Incompletes

Based on adopted University of Tennessee-Knoxville policy, a grade of *I* (Incomplete) is reserved for emergencies that prevent the student from completing the course on time. Incompletes are granted only under "the most unusual of circumstances" and solely at the discretion of the instructor. Plan your semester's course of study carefully to insure sufficient time to complete the

required work. For students who simply "disappear" without contacting the instructor and without completing the required form, an "F" is submitted.

## **COURSE EVALUATION**

You will be invited by email to evaluate the course at the end of the term via TNVoice. Please participate in this valuable process. I also invite your comments throughout the course and read all comments, suggestions, and recommendations.

## **DISCLAIMER**

The instructor reserves the right to revise, alter, or amend this syllabus as necessary. Students will be notified in writing of any such changes.

## COURSE OUTLINE

Week	Date	Topic	Class Activities/Assignment Due Dates, if applicable
1	01/18	Introduction & Design Basics	See Canvas Session 2 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 1: SK
2	01/25	Interaction Design Basics	See Canvas Session 2 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 7: AC
3	02/01	Modeling the Users: I	See Canvas Session 3 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 3: AC
4	02/08	Modeling the Users: II	See Canvas Session 4 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 4: AC  <b>Assignment 1: Good Design vs Bad Design Due 2/10 at 11:59 PM.</b>
5	02/15	Product Design Platforms	See Canvas Session 5 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 9: AC
6	02/22	Information Architecture	See Canvas Session 6 Module for latest assigned readings
7	03/01	Interaction Flow	See Canvas Session 7 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 11 & 12: AC Chapter 2: SK  <b>Assignment 2: User Personas Due 3/3/2021 at 11:59 PM.</b>
8	03/08	Interaction Design Principles: Affordances	See Canvas Session 8 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 13: AC Chapter 3: SK

9	03/15	Interaction Design Principles: Data Flow	See Canvas Session 9 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 14: AC
10	03/22	Interaction Design: Prevent Error	See Canvas Session 10 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 15: AC  <b>Assignment 3: Information Design Flow Due 3/24/2021 at 11:59 PM.</b>
11	03/29	Interaction Design Principles: Designing for Diversity of Needs	See Canvas Session 11 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 16: AC Chapter 12: SK
12	04/05	Visual Design Principles	See Canvas Session 12 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 17: AC Chapter 6: SK
13	04/12	Visual Design Elements	See Canvas Session 13 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 17: AC
14	04/19	Designing for the Web	See Canvas Session 14 Module for latest assigned readings  Chapter 19 & 20: AC Chapter 10: SK
15	04/26	Class Presentations	<b>Class Presentations (4/26)</b> <b>Assignment 4: Visual Redesign Due 4/28 at 11:59 PM.</b>