

Graphic User Interface Design Prompt

Submit in Canvas by December 5, class time

Format: Please submit a URL.

Please include your team members' group name on the interface.

17 points: This is a group assignment; everyone receives the same grade for this project.

In the first part of this course, we focused on analyzing existing interfaces. In the second part of this course, we will turn to creating our own interfaces! The purpose of this assignment is to give you the chance to critically design and interface for a real audience here at the University of Michigan. While the audience for these interfaces will be other University of Michigan students and myself, this assignment is also practical in that you can use these skills in careers in many communications careers. [This website](#) offers some useful examples of jobs that students in communication and media studies often pursue, and you can see that many of them include digital components and websites.

Your **main task** is to create an interface that addresses your local community here at the University of Michigan and is beneficial to other students at the University of Michigan in some way. The interface which you create should not already exist. You might think about the types of projects you might create in your careers (examples [here](#) and [here](#)), but I suggest thinking about your local communities.

Your audience for these interfaces will be other students (and, myself). Due to the constraints of this class, we will not get the chance to fully engage with the community throughout the process with this assignment, as a Constanza-Chock argues that we should do. However, as students here, you know the context, culture, resources, and needs of students here. You are already in a good position to scope and frame the problems and issues that affect you, and you likely already know the community resources that you and your peers have already developed to address those issues.

The interface should significantly vary from the standard templates on each website, and it should: (1) Have at least **five** pages (2) Have some sort of **navigation** system (3) Include **text** and information that is clear to your readers (4) Include at least two appropriate and accessible **images** or **videos** which you either create or source and cite. The text and images are your own, or they are appropriately attributed in a works cited page (not included in the five pages above), and (5) broadly follow **the guidelines outlined for UX/UI designers and accessibility** in class, or explain your choices for deviating from these standards in the accompanying individual memo.

Successful interfaces will demonstrate characteristics of [UX/UI](#) and accessibility (for audiences at UMich):

- Follow basic principles of UX/UI design and follow basic design principles that we have discussed and talked about in class, and incorporate clear and consistent design that meaningfully incorporates things like, organizing hierarchy, contrasting and accessible colors, thoughtful sizing of images and fonts (big enough to see, but not overtaking the page), legible and accessible fonts, and adequate and meaningful spacing between items including effective use of negative space.

*This assignment meets the course outcomes (3) Collaborate with a team to plan an interface and design that responds to their community and (4) Create, adapt, and design interfaces for their local communities at the university. *Since all arguments are situated, please note that myself and your peers are the audience for this paper.

- Have a usable and flexible navigation system with shortcuts that demonstrate tolerance for “error” and offer multiple ways of using the site, as well as the ability for people to reverse their actions
- Provide some sort of informative feedback for audiences
- Adhere to principles of [accessibility](#).

Note: These components should not be thought of as a “checklist” as designs must adapt to meet the demands of particular audiences and situations. So, you may choose to not adhere to these standards for your particular audiences or for rhetorical effect. If you choose to not adhere to one of these standards, you should make that explicit and clear in the accompanying memo and explain why you made this choice.

Steps:

You will have already completed many of these steps with your Proposal. However, I will outline some suggested steps here below:

1. To begin, I suggest thinking about your experiences here at the University of Michigan and in Ann Arbor. What kinds of online resources and interfaces do you wish you had either now or when you moved here? What is an interface or website that you think would contribute to the community or would have been beneficial to you and your fellow students in some way? You should work with your team early to explicitly scope and frame your interface and to develop specific **goals** and a Problem/Benefit Statement.
2. Next, think about what kinds of interfaces or websites would help address whatever you think could improve or benefit your community in some way. Following a Design Justice framework, think about what community resources already exist. (Scoping and Framing Questions for Problems/Benefits Statement Handout should help with both of these steps).
3. Third, think about your own technical skills and the free website builders that I have included in this class (including, but not limited to: [Google Sites](#), [Weebly](#), [Wix](#), [Wordpress](#), or [Squarespace](#), or any other ones that you find online and are comfortable using). Given your own technical skills and the limitations of this class, what kinds of interfaces are feasible for this assignment?
4. Once you have decided on an interface that you want to build that you are technically capable of building, ask yourself basic questions about the context:
 - a. **Who** is the audience? The University of Michigan is a big school, so you might need to tailor your website to your particular community within the University of Michigan. What are your community’s interests? What do they value? What do they know?
 - b. **What** information do you want to convey?
 - c. **Where/How** will the audience access the interface? Will audiences access the interface in Ann Arbor? Before they arrive? How will they access the site? Will they use their phones or desktop/laptop devices?
 - d. **When** will they access the interface? What are the current events going on around the interface? Is it responding to a specific situation? You might also think about what audiences’ emotional states might be when they access the interface. So, if you collate resources for an emergency situation, people may be distraught and want answers quickly. Alternatively, if you are writing a food blog, people might access that in their free time when they are in a good mood, or for inspiration.

5. Next, look at the prompt and think about how you can distribute tasks among your team members to complete the interface. You might think about distributing tasks like such as initial research (collecting information about how to design the site or to include on the site), initial design and interface set up, creating materials and content to put onto the site, proofreading and editing content, testing and editing the interface design, and checking to ensure that the interface meets the criteria on the prompt.
6. Start building the interface! While I have listed these steps here as a linear process, it is likely that your design process will be iterative and, much like when you write a paper, you will revise.

Examples: In addition to the useful ideas [here](#) or [here](#). Some other ideas include:

- For people interested in public relations and marketing, if there is an upcoming event which you think needs to be highlighted or have a website to collate information, you can use this assignment to build a website for that event. The event should be appropriate, so please talk to me first.
- For people who are a part of a particular university club or organization, you can create a website interface for that particular club for potential and current members.
- If you are a part of any local music groups, you might consider creating a music website to highlight local musicians or places to see live music.
- You might consider starting a blog website about a particular aspect of the University of Michigan. For instance, you could create a food blog about the different places to eat or get coffee in and around campus. This might be especially helpful for people who follow particular dietary preferences.
- Perhaps you start a film blog to write about the new movies that come out at the theatre. For this suggestion and the previous suggestion, people interested in marketing and advertising, you might consider how [advertising companies use blogging](#).
- For people interested in journalism or online publishing, you can create a news website dedicated to a specific community on campus. While the University of Michigan already has [The Michigan Daily](#), how might you tailor or create a news site for your particular community (your major, for instance)? What does an effective news site look like?
- You can also create an interface that houses resources for new students. Constanza-Chock says we should not use a deficit model, but we should instead recognize that people draw from a repertoire of skills and assets. What are some resources that new students coming into the University of Michigan might want to know about or have access to? For all of these suggestions, you could consider creating uploadable infographics from websites like [Canva.com](#) or [Piktochart.com](#).
 - You could collate or create study guides and other resources for students in your major. For instance, [CommunicationTheory.org](#) offers useful, bite-sized guides for communication students. Can you create a similar site for media studies? Or create study guides (without cheating, obviously).
 - You could consider creating other guides for new students like housing guides, campus food guides, parking guides, mental health resources, etc.
 - Or, for people moving to Michigan from warmer parts of the country, perhaps you create resources for how to stay warm and/or have fun in the Michigan winter.
 - You might consider collating campus and community resources for students with immediate needs, such as food banks and places that accept SNAP benefits, etc. I

suggest you pick a particular need, rather than trying to address everything. These types of websites can be helpful, but, it is also important to recognize that they do not address the broader structural issues of Design Justice.

- You can also create an interface to highlight a particular attraction for new students, or to document some sort of local history in Ann Arbor. You might imagine this interface like an online museum exhibition, such as the ones at the [Smithsonian](#), although it would be important to critically engage with and think about the communities who lived through that history.

Note: For this course, please do not design an interface with sign-up information.

Rubric

Please note: I have included this rubric here for clarity and transparency about my expectations. However, all of these criteria are linked to each other and cannot be separated.

	Excellent	Good	Developing
Clear and Consistent Design that uses UX/UI principles of visual design and layout 3.5 points	<p>The interface meaningfully incorporates principles of UX/UI and effective design as outlined in class or incorporates an explanation for the design choices that deviate from “good” design in the memo. (Tell me to expect a deviation in class or via email).</p> <p>Since accessibility is not a checklist, you may not end up needing to use all of the elements listed, but you should explain that in the accompanying memo.</p>	<p>Some elements are less well incorporated, or not done well. Alternatively, the interface does not meaningfully these elements, although the effort to incorporate these elements meaningfully is clear. Deviations are not fully explained in the memo.</p>	<p>The interface does not meaningfully incorporates principles of UX/UI and effective design as outlined in class, or the elements, and appears cursory/perfunctory and deviations are not explained in the memo.</p>
Clear and Consistent Design that uses UX/UI principles of interaction and navigation 3.5 points	<p>The interface meaningfully incorporates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A usable and flexible navigation system with shortcuts that demonstrate tolerance for “error” and offers multiple ways of using the site, as well as the ability for people to reverse their actions Provides some sort of informative feedback 	<p>The interface has a usable navigation system, although the navigation system may not be easily visible or easy to use.</p> <p>The interface may have less tolerance for “error” or it may be difficult for site visitors to undo an action.</p> <p>There may be only one way to navigate the site.</p>	<p>The navigation systems is either not present or it is not visible or usable.</p> <p>The interface does not offer site visitors the option to undo their actions.</p> <p>There may be only one way to navigate the site and the interface does not give</p>

	for audiences (where relevant and necessary)	The interface may incorporate some feedback for users, but that feedback may be unclear, or not useful.	informative feedback to users.
Accessibility 3.5 points	<p>Adhere to principles of accessibility including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text alternatives for non-text content • Captions for multimedia • Content presented in different ways • Content that is “easier” to see and hear (e.g. sufficient contrast, the ability to stop and start videos, etc.) • When appropriate, functionality from the keyboard and other modalities. • Enough time to access content. • Content that is easy to navigate, find, and locate. • Readable and understandable text • Content appears and operates in predictable ways and users can avoid mistakes 	<p>The interface is missing one of these elements, although the interface uses all of the other elements well.</p> <p>Alternatively, the interface does not meaningfully use all of these elements, although the effort to incorporate these elements meaningfully is clear.</p>	The interface does not incorporate one or more of these elements, or the interface does not meaningfully include these elements, and appears cursory/perfunctory.
Responds to an audience at the University of Michigan	The interface clearly responds to the community (or subcommunity) at the University of Michigan, and takes an asset based approach	The clear response to the audience at the University of Michigan is less clear. The interface may draw from	The interface does not clearly respond to your audience at the University of Michigan.

3.5 points	to build on existing community resources.	community resources, although the connection is less clear.	
Meets Assignment requirements 3 points	<p>The interface has five pages.</p> <p>The interface incorporates text and at least two images or videos.</p> <p>The text and images are appropriately cited and given credit.</p> <p>The interface includes all of your team's group name.</p>	<p>The interface still has five pages, although one or more of these pages is significantly underdeveloped.</p> <p>The interface includes text and images, although that text and the images/videos are significantly underdeveloped or improperly sourced and cited.</p> <p>The interface is missing your team name.</p>	<p>The interface has fewer than five pages.</p> <p>The interface does not include text and two images/videos.</p> <p>The interface is missing your team name.</p>