

Graphic Architecture Project IV: Interaction and Environment

Tuesdays, 6 – 8pm, 200 Buell Hall

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Overview

This class is about the overlap of interaction and environment – that is, how people interact with machines in a spatial context. With reference to the design of exhibitions, mobile apps, and physical computing, we will reconsider conventional screen-oriented interactive design from a perspective that includes sequence, scale, and site-specificity. By designing interactive experiences we will investigate how interactions change spaces, and how spaces affect interactions.

The course is organized around a series of practical exercises. Through these assignments and accompanying readings, we will address topics including interfaces, users, and content, while introducing methodologies including experience mapping, wireframing, and interaction prototyping. In addition, a series of student-lead presentations will survey the state of art in the field. The bulk of each class will be devoted to presentation and discussion of student work, with occasional lectures, class discussions, and demonstrations.

This is a full semester class. Students do not need to take other GAP courses to enroll in this course. Basic knowledge of Photoshop or similar visual design tools is recommended; rudimentary programming experience may be useful but is not necessary.

Schedule

- September 9 – September 13
Introductory Classes
- September 20 – October 4
First Project: Content
- October 11 – October 25
Second Project: Users
- November 1 – November 29
Third Project: Site

Class Format

Each class will include a combination of:

- Lectures or demonstrations
- Discussion about required readings
- 10 minute case studies (see details below)
- Presentation and discussion of work

The bulk of class time will be devoted to presentation and discussion of work, so it is important to come to each class with work that you are prepared to present and discuss.

Case Studies

Over the course of the semester, each student will present a 10-minute case study reporting on a first hand experience of an interactive environment. To guide your research, we will assign categories for your work, but it will be up to you to select the specific experience you would like to report on.

Sign up for a presentation slot in the spreadsheet here: goo.gl/0W7jvS. To sign up, you must enter your name and email address, and propose a specific subject for your case study within the assigned category. You are encouraged to select experiences that are unusual or cutting edge.

Your presentation should include:

- Photographs or other records of the experience
- An explanation of the of how the experience is structured
- Observations of participant behaviors (including your own)
- An inventory of the technologies that were used
- An analysis of the successful and unsuccessful aspects of the experience
- Competitive context (how does this compare to other examples of this kind of experience?)
- Opportunities for innovation

Evaluation

Students should attempt to create experiences that are both exploratory and pragmatic. Work should be expressive, critical, funny, surprising, or unusual; it should also be plausible and accessible enough to exist in the real world. Craft in the creation of presentation materials and prototypes is important, as is the iterative development of ideas from class to class. However, the focus of our evaluation will be on the underlying thinking: in response to each assignment, how does your work engage the relationship between interaction and environment?

Grading

- Case Study: 5%
- First Project: 20%
- Second Project: 20%
- Third Project: 30%
- Class Participation: 25%

Attendance

Please email us in advance if you must miss a class. Three absences or repeated tardiness will result in a failing grade.

Academic Integrity

While some projects may require the reuse of material created by others, all such material must be credited.

Students must adhere to the GSAPP Honor System goo.gl/zPTXjt and Plagiarism Policy goo.gl/NzysS9. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in appropriate action.

Materials

Readings will be distributed during each class, or made available online.

To complete assignments, you will need to create diagrams, images of interfaces, and prototypes. This may be achieved using whatever techniques you are comfortable with. For the creation of diagrams and interfaces, we recommend software such as InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop, or Sketch. For creating interactive prototypes, software such as InVision and Keynote will be introduced. Students who are comfortable writing code will be welcome to use it, but the class will not require any coding.

For physical prototyping, students may wish to use simple hardware such as laptops, smartphones, tablets, projectors, etc. Procuring this equipment and ensuring that it works is the responsibility of the student.