

INF 385T Accessible User Experience

SPRING 2023

Class Meets: Thursdays, 6:30-9:30 PM, UTA 1.208

Instructor: Georgette Sullivan

Pronouns: G/Her/She

Office Hours: Online or by appointment

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Course Description

University Catalog Course Description

An in-depth course in UX with a concentration on digital product accessibility and inclusive design. Students will understand the foundations, functional requirements, and practical applications of Accessibility and how they can be effective members of the teams who employ A11y practitioners.

Pre-requisites for the course

Graduate Standing

How will I learn?

Teaching Modality Information

This is an in-person course and class meetings will be held in-person throughout the semester. In-person class will be supplemented with a ZOOM meeting for those who maybe experiencing an illness and are still able to attend class. All classes will be recorded and posted via Panopto.

Statement on Learning Success

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need to be adaptable because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to reach out to the student resources available through UT.

Statement on Flexibility

In acknowledgement of COVID 19 and its impact on the University of Texas at Austin community, this course will reaffirm one of the core values here at UT Austin: responsibility. Our responsibility to ourselves and each other is to put our humanity in the forefront of our academic pursuits. With that being said, this semester I commit to being adaptable in this time of great need, which is reflected in the course policies below around attendance, grading, and assignments/exams.

If you experience any hardships such as illness, accident, family crisis please know that these policies may be amended and therefore you should communicate with me as soon as you feel comfortable doing so. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable discussing with me, please visit [Student Emergency Services](#). For additional campus resources, please visit protect.utexas.edu.

Course Requirements

Required Materials

Textbooks:

Inclusive Design for a Digital World: Designing with Accessibility in Mind

Author: Regine M. Gilbert

Mismatch

Author: Kat Holmes

Various web materials, links provided in context to course topics.

Optional Recommended Textbook:

A Web for Everyone

Author: Sarah Horton

Class materials, supplemental resources, grades, and announcements will be posted on the course Canvas site

<https://utexas.instructure.com/>

Classroom expectations

Your preparation for discussion and participation is extremely important for you. Here are some ground rules:

Respect for others is vital. You can expect that as the instructor, I am concerned about the educational experience of each student in the class, respectful of individual differences, encouraging of creativity, reasonably open and accessible to discuss material and assignments, thorough in evaluating assignments, and rigorous yet supportive in maintaining high standards for performance.

As a student, you are expected to work individually and with others, to create an atmosphere that is safe, valuing of one another, and open to diverse perspectives. Everyone is expected to show courtesy, civility, and respect for one another. Comments or postings that degrade or ridicule another, whether based on individual or cultural differences, are unacceptable.

Participation/Engagement. Thinking is not a spectator sport. You need to participate in class by communicating your understanding and testing others' understanding with questions and dialogue. This course requires active participation, which is crucial to your success in becoming a critical thinker. The more you put into it, the more you will get out of it. Active participation includes being prepared to discuss readings, assignments, and concepts, engaging yourself in classroom activities and discussion, and putting your best effort in both formal and informal assignments. Regardless of the format we use to conduct class sessions, consider your participation to be the equivalent to a face-to-face class session and be prepared to engage actively and thoughtfully with me and your peers.

Have fun! This course is an opportunity to learn about exclusion and equipping you with the knowledge and skills to design accessible and inclusive experiences. Some of what we learn and discuss may be uncomfortable. It is OK to express your discomfort or to take a break from the discussion.

Student Rights & Responsibilities

- You have a right to a learning environment that supports mental and physical wellness.
- You have a right to respect.
- You have a right to be assessed and graded fairly.
- You have a right to freedom of opinion and expression.
- You have a right to privacy and confidentiality.
- You have a right to meaningful and equal participation, to self-organize groups to improve your learning environment.
- You have a right to learn in an environment that is welcoming to all people. No student shall be isolated, excluded or diminished in any way.

With these rights come responsibilities:

- You are responsible for taking care of yourself, managing your time, and communicating with the teaching team and with others if things start to feel out of control or overwhelming.
- You are responsible for acting in a way that is worthy of respect and always respectful of others.
- Your experience with this course is directly related to the quality of the energy that you bring to it, and your energy shapes the quality of your peers' experiences.
- You are responsible for creating an inclusive environment and for speaking up when someone is excluded.
- You are responsible for holding yourself accountable to these standards, holding each other to these standards, and holding the teaching team accountable as well.

Assignments

Assessment of your learning will occur through a variety of venues including the homework assignments, quizzes, and class/team participation.

1. **Homework Assignments**

Homework Assignments range from observing the exclusions in the real and digital world, building empathy for those excluded, evaluating and auditing digital experience. **(70% of your grade)**

2. **Quizzes**

There are no formal exams in this course. There are Quizzes based on the assigned readings and lectures. **(15% of your grade)**

3. **Class participation**

For the purposes of this class, **participation** means *obvious* engagement. We understand that folks “engage” in different ways – some like to talk it out, some like to listen and absorb, some write it down for later digestion. When we say “obvious engagement”, we mean being punctual, alert and attentive. Just to be clear, clues to us that you are not engaged and participating include head down on the desk, texting or generally having a mobile device in your hand, not being a contributing member of small team work we do in class, or talking amongst your classmates about something not related to what we’re discussing. **(15% of your grade)**

Absences

Being present is critical to achieving our goals for this course. You are welcome to utilize one (1) class absence during the semester as needed without explanation to me. In this case, you will be allowed to make up assignments or participation points you may have missed during this session. In addition to participating in synchronous meetings, you can earn participation points through assignments and asynchronous discussions. However, please keep in mind that if you miss multiple classes, you will begin to see a dip in your attendance and participation points.

If you are absent on the day that your team meets, you are responsible for providing your team with the necessary information to compensate for your absence. *It is crucial to keep in communication with your team members; you are responsible for letting both us and your team know if you cannot make it to a class.*

Excused Absence: Absences will be considered excused if they are for religious holidays or extenuating circumstances due to medical or family emergencies. If you plan to miss class due to observance of a religious holiday, please let us know at least two weeks in advance. You will not be penalized for this absence, although you will still be responsible for any work you will miss on that day if applicable. Check with us for details or arrangements.

If you have to be absent, use your resources wisely. Ask your team and other classmates to get a run-down and notes on any lessons you miss. If you find there are topics that we covered while you were gone that raise questions, you may arrange for an meeting to discuss. Email specific questions you have in advance so that we can make the most of our time. “What did I miss?” is not specific enough.

Late work and grade periods

No late assignments will be accepted. However, this semester each student will have an “End of the week” grace period for two (2) assignments to be used at your discretion. “End of the week” is defined as Saturday at 9pm, so as long as you submit the assignment before that time, you will have used one of your two allotted “end of the week” grace periods and no points will be taken for lateness.

(For example: The assignment is due Tuesday at noon. If you turn it in that Tuesday at 1:00pm, you will have used one of your “end of the week” grace periods. Similarly, if you turn it in on Friday at 3:00pm you will have used one of these grace periods.)

Grading Policy

As I hope you can see, flexibility is built into the assignments to support your success in this course. If you miss a smaller assignment or don’t do as well on your earlier journal entries, your grade will not be impacted significantly. Consequently, the final grades are firm, and no additional curve is available.

Grade	Cutoff
A	94%
A-	90%
B+	87%
B	84%
B-	80%
C+	77%
C	74%
C-	70%
D	65%
F	<65%

Course Schedule

All instructions, assignments, readings, rubrics and essential information will be on the Canvas website at <https://utexas.instructure.com>. Check this site regularly and use it to ask questions about the course schedule.

Introduction and Orientation <i>Week 1</i>	Overview: We will start with a review of the history of civil rights of accessibility in the United States, review the legislative history and get to know each other.
Unit 1: Building Awareness of Exclusions <i>Weeks 2 - 4</i>	Overview: We will build our powers of awareness for exclusions in the physical and digital worlds.
Unit 2: The Tools of Accessibility <i>Weeks 5 - 9</i>	Overview: Learn about the guidelines that define accessible design and ways to evaluate the accessibility of digital products and designs.
Unit 3 Evaluating Accessibility <i>Week 10-13</i>	Overview: We use tools and user research methods to analyze the accessibility of digital products.
Unit 4: Building Inclusive Team Cultures and the Business Value of Accessibility <i>To be determined, based on the availability of the guest speaker.</i>	Overview: Our ability to design for ALL is challenged by our own biases, overcoming those biases take surrounding ourselves everyday with people not like ourselves. We will discuss how to build the most inclusive team and team culture that adds value to the business.

Changes to the schedule or assignments may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced (although I will do my best to ensure that you receive the changes with as much advanced notice as possible).

Policies and Disclosures

Academic Integrity Expectations

Students who violate University rules on academic misconduct are subject to the student conduct process and potential disciplinary action. A student found responsible for academic misconduct may be assigned both a status sanction and a grade impact for the course. The grade impact could range from a zero on the assignment in question up to a failing grade in the course. A status sanction can range from probation, deferred suspension and/or dismissal from the University. To learn more about the academic integrity standards, tips for avoiding a potential academic misconduct violation and the overall conduct process, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT and is subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course. To learn more about what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, see the [Avoiding Plagiarism tutorial](#) developed by the UT Libraries in partnership with the Writing Flag program and Student Judicial Services.

Confidentiality of Class Recordings

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

Getting Help with Technology

Students needing help with technology in this course should contact the [ITS Service Desk](#).

Content Warning

Our classroom provides an open space for the critical and civil exchange of ideas. Some readings and other content in this course will include topics that some students may find offensive and/or traumatizing. I'll aim to forewarn students about potentially disturbing content, and I ask all students to help to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and sensitivity.

Basic Needs Security

Any student who faces challenges with food insecurity or financial hardship and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to visit UT Outpost for support. [UT Outpost](#), is a free on-campus food pantry and career closet for all currently enrolled UT students. Furthermore, if you are comfortable notifying me, please do so, as I may have additional resources I can share.

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class without explicit, written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. The University is aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](#) in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in initiation of the student conduct process and include charge(s) for academic misconduct, potentially resulting in sanctions, including a grade impact.

Religious Holy Days

By [UT Austin policy](#), you must notify me of your pending absence as far in advance as possible of the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Names and Pronouns

Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name, unless they have added a "chosen name" with the registrar's office, which you can do so [here](#). I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name that is different from what appears on the official roster, and by the pronouns you have asked to be used for you (she/he/they/ze, etc). Please advise me of any changes early in the semester so that I may make appropriate updates to my records. For instructions on how to add your pronouns to Canvas, visit [this site](#). Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender identity & expression, and nationalities. More resources available on the Gender and Sexuality Center's website, www.utgsc.org.

Land Acknowledgment

I would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on the Indigenous lands of Turtle Island, the ancestral name for what now is called North America. Moreover, I would like to acknowledge the Alabama-Coushatta, Caddo, Carrizo/Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Comanche, Kickapoo, Lipan Apache, Tonkawa and Ysleta Del Sur Pueblo, and all the American Indian and

Indigenous Peoples and communities who have been or have become a part of these lands and territories in Texas. For resources and calls to action, visit [this site](#).

University Resources and Supports for Students

Disability & Access

The university is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Disability & Access (D&A). Please refer to the D&A website for more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC)

All of us benefit from support during times of struggle. Know you are not alone. If you or anyone you know is experiencing symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression, academic concerns, loneliness, difficulty sleeping, or any other concern impacting your wellbeing – you are strongly encouraged to connect with CMHC. The Counseling and Mental Health Center provides a wide variety of mental health services to all UT students including crisis services, counseling services with immediate support and well-being resources. Additionally, CARE Counselors are located within the academic schools and colleges. These counselors get to know the concerns that are unique to their college's students. For more information on CMHC, visit <https://cmhc.utexas.edu>, call 512-471-3515, or see information on specific resources below.

- CMHC 24/7 crisis line: 512-471-2255 (CALL)
- National Suicide Prevention Hotline: 988
- Locate your college's CARE counselor: <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/CARE.html>
- 24/7 confidential real-time virtual counseling available via chat and phone: <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/myssp.html>
- CMHC groups and classes: <https://cmhc.utexas.edu/groups.html>

University Health Services (UHS)

Your physical health and wellness are a priority. University Health Services is an on-campus high-quality medical facility providing care to all UT students. Services offered by UHS include general medicine, urgent care, a 24/7 nurse advice line, gynecology, sports medicine, physical therapy, lab and radiology services, COVID-19 testing and vaccinations and much more. For additional information, visit <https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu> or call 512-471-4955.

Sanger Learning Center

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to strengthen their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, public speaking, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <https://ugs.utexas.edu/slc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

Student Emergency Services (SES)

Student Emergency Services in the Office of the Dean of Students helps students and their families during difficult or emergency situations. Assistance includes outreach, advocacy, intervention, support, and referrals to relevant campus and community resources. If you need to be absent from class due to a family emergency, medical or mental health concern, or academic difficulty due to crisis or an emergency situation, you can work with Student Emergency Services. SES will document your situation and notify your professors. Additional information is available at <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/> or by calling 512-471-5017.

BeVocal

BeVocal is a university-wide initiative to promote the idea that individual Longhorns have the power to prevent high-risk behavior and harm. At UT Austin all Longhorns have the power to intervene and reduce harm. To learn more about

BeVocal and how you can help to build a culture of care on campus, go to: <https://wellnessnetwork.utexas.edu/BeVocal>.

Wellbeing Resources

[Longhorn Wellness Center](#) resources for self-care
[Virtual Mindfulness and Stress Reduction Activities](#)

Undergraduate Writing Center: <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

UT Libraries: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

Important Safety Information

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or professors, contact BCCAL (the Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line) at <https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line> or by calling [512-232-5050](tel:512-232-5050). Confidentiality will be maintained as much as possible, however the university may be required to release some information to appropriate parties.

Classroom safety and covid-19

- For any illness, students should stay home if they are sick or contagious, not only to stop the spread, but also to prioritize their personal well-being.
- UHS provides [symptomatic COVID-19 testing](#) for students. Schedule your appointment by calling 512-471-4955 or online within the [MyUHS patient portal](#). Learn more about [symptomatic COVID-19 testing here](#).
- Disposable masks are available for students at the William C. Powers, Jr. Student Activity Center and Texas Union hospitality desks.
- The [exposure action chart](#) offers guidance on what to do if you have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19 or if you test positive. If you experience symptoms, stay home and isolate and follow the instructions for symptomatic in the chart.
- Stay up to date on [COVID-19 vaccinations](#) by getting all available boosters when eligible. Vaccines are available through University Health Services.
- Additionally, UHS maintains up to date resources on COVID-19, which can be found here:
- [COVID-19 Information and Resources](#)

Carrying of Handguns on Campus

Texas' Open Carry law expressly prohibits a licensed to carry (LTC) holder from carrying a handgun openly on the campus of an institution of higher education such as UT Austin. Students in this class should be aware of the following university policies:

- Students in this class who hold a license to carry are asked to [review the university policy regarding campus carry](#).
- Individuals who hold a license to carry are eligible to carry a concealed handgun on campus, including in most outdoor areas, buildings and spaces that are accessible to the public, and in classrooms.
- It is the responsibility of concealed-carry license holders to carry their handguns on or about their person at all times while on campus. Open carry is NOT permitted, meaning that a license holder may not carry a partially or wholly visible handgun on campus premises or on any university driveway, street, sidewalk or walkway, parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area.
- Per my right, I prohibit carrying of handguns in my personal office. Note that this information will also be conveyed to all students verbally during the first week of class. This written notice is intended to reinforce the verbal notification, and is not a "legally effective" means of notification in its own right.

Title IX Disclosure

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Education Code, Section 51.252 (formerly known as Senate Bill 212) requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, to report any information to the Title IX Office regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees

who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, writing assignments, class discussions, one-on-one conversations, or third-party reports) must report it to the Title IX Coordinator. Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, please remember that I will be required to report this information.

Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Education Code, Section 51.252, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX regulations and are required to report a wide range of behaviors we refer to as sexual misconduct, including the types of sexual misconduct covered under Texas Education Code, Section 51.252. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex – including pregnancy and parental status – in educational programs and activities. The Title IX office has [developed supportive ways](#) and compiled [campus resources](#) to support all impacted by a Title IX matter.

If you would like to speak with a Case Manager for Support and Resources, who can provide support, resources or academic accommodations, in the Title IX Office, please email supportandresources@austin.utexas.edu. A Case Manager can also provide support, resources, and academic accommodations to pregnant, nursing, and parenting students.

For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu>, contact the Title IX Office via email at titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419.

Campus Safety

The following are recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the [Office of Campus Safety](#), 512-471-5767,

- Students should sign up for Campus Emergency Text Alerts at the page linked above.
- Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus must evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
- Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
- Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
- In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
- For more information, please visit the [Office of Emergency Management](#).