# INF385E Information Architecture and Design, Fall 2022

**Unique No.: 28499**

Class time: Monday: 9:00AM – 12:00PM

Classroom: UTA 1.208

**Instructor: Yan Zhang (she/her/hers)**

Office hrs: By appointment

Tele: 512-471-9448

Email: [yanz@utexas.edu](mailto:yanz@utexas.edu)

## Course description

User-centered design of web-based information-rich systems based on interaction design principles and user information needs and behavior research.

## Course objectives

### By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Understand the basic principles of user-centered design, usability, and usability testing in the context of information architecture (IA)
2. Understand IA development process, including research, design, and evaluation
3. Analyze and design IA, primarily including content organization, labeling, navigation, and search systems, for web-based user interfaces using a variety of methods and tools (e.g., card sort)
4. Become versed in developing IA process documentations, such as content inventory, concept map, persona, and site map.

## Required Text

Rosenfeld, L., Morville, P., & Arango, J. (2015). Information Architecture: For the Web and Beyond (4th edition). Digital book available through UT library. Search the book in the UT catalog system: <https://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

Additional readings will be posted on the class website.

Recommended reading [digital book available in UT library]

Redish, J. (Ginny). (2012). Letting Go of the Words: Writing Web Content That Works. Elsevier Science & Technology. <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/utxa/detail.action?docID=953186>

## Policies

### *Policies concerning assignments*

* Assignments must be submitted by midnight (11:59PM) on the due date.
* In fairness to students who turn in assignments on time, all late papers will be penalized by lowering the earned grade one grade level (e.g., from A- to B+; from B to B-) for each day that the assignment is late.
* No assignment submitted more than one week after the due date will be accepted.
* These penalties will not apply to students who know in advance that they will be submitting an assignment late, and let me know in advance. “In advance” means up until 24 hours before the class session in which the assignment is due.

### *Policies on class attendance and participation*

* Reading assignments must be done before class so that you can ask questions and participate in discussions in class.
* You must participate in class discussions. In-class discussions and activities play an important role in this class. Extensive participation in class discussion will be an essential element of your learning success on the subject of understanding and serving users. Active involvement in learning increases what is remembered, how well it is assimilated, and how the learning is used in new situations. Class participation will be graded as part of your final grade.
* Attending each class is highly recommended. If you know in advance that you must miss a class, let me know in advance (up until 24 hours before the class session).
* If you miss a class session, unexpectedly, get in contact with me or the TA ASAP.

## University of Texas Honor Code

Each student in the course is expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code:

“As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity.”

This means that work you produce on assignments is all your own work.

Always cite your sources. If you use words or ideas that are not your own (or that you have used in previous class), you must make that clear otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including failure of the course.

You must familiarize yourself with appropriate academic conduct and honesty by reading this guide: UT Austin Academic Integrity (<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/cwgs/_files/pdf-4/ai2012.pdf>)

Other UTexas Academic Honesty Resources:

1. Definitions of plagiarism and University procedures (<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acadint_plagiarism.php>)
2. Plagiarism tutorial (<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/services/instruction/learningmodules/plagiarism/>)

## Grading

### *Grading scale*

In the School of Information, the following guidelines are used in grading:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| A | 4.00 | Excellent. High degree of mastery of the course material. |
| A- | 3.67 | Very good. |
| B+ | 3.33 | More than satisfactory. |
| B | 3.00 | Satisfactory. Work consistent with academic expectations of graduate students. |
| B- | 2.67 | Less than satisfactory. |
| C+ | 2.33 | Unsatisfactory. May indicate the instructor's reservations about the student's ability to meet the iSchool’s academic requirements. |
| C | 2.00 | Unsatisfactory. Indicates the instructor's reservations about the student's ability to meet the iSchool’s academic requirements. |
| C- | 1.67 | Unsatisfactory. Indicates the instructor's strong reservations about the student's ability to meet the iSchool’s academic requirements. Any course with a grade lower than C cannot be counted toward a student’s degree. |
| D | 1.00 | Unacceptable. Indicates the instructor's very strong reservations about the student's ability to meet the iSchool’s academic requirements and to earn a graduate degree. Any course with a grade lower than C cannot be counted toward a student’s degree. |
| F | 0.00 | Failing. |

Semester grades will be computed as follows:   
A = 94-100; A- = 90-93  
B+ = 87-89; B = 84-86; B- = 80-83  
C+ = 77-79; C = 74-76; C- = 70-73  
D = 60-69  
F = anything below 59

### *Grading rubric for presentations in the class*

For all your presentations in this class (topic presentations and final project presentations), you are encouraged to use Powerpoint or some other presentation program (such as Open Office or Lotus Symphony). The grading rubric for the presentation is listed below (Note: This [rubric](http://www.ncsu.edu/midlink/rub.pres.html) was developed by [Information Technology Evaluation Services, NC Department of Public Instruction](http://www.ncpublicschools.org/). However, it was slightly modified for our purposes.)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Organization** | |
| Unacceptable | Audience cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information |
| Acceptable | Audience has difficulty following presentation because presenter jumps around |
| Good | Presenter presents information in logical sequence which audience can follow |
| Excellent | Presenter presents information in logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow |
| **Subject Knowledge** | |
| Unacceptable | Presenter does not have grasp of information; presenter cannot answer questions about subject |
| Acceptable | Presenter is uncomfortable with information and is able to answer only rudimentary questions |
| Good | Presenter is at ease with expected answers to all questions, but fails to elaborate |
| Excellent | Presenter demonstrates full knowledge (more than required) by answering all class questions with explanations and elaboration |
| **Graphics** | |
| Unacceptable | Presenter uses superfluous graphics or no graphics |
| Acceptable | Presenter occasionally uses graphics that rarely support text and presentation |
| Good | Presenter's graphics relate to text and presentation |
| Excellent | Presenter's graphics explain and reinforce screen text and presentation |
| **Spelling & Grammar** | |
| Unacceptable | Presenter's presentation has more than one misspelling and more than one grammatical error |
| Acceptable | Presentation has exactly one misspelling and/or exactly one grammatical error, which a spell- or grammar checker would catch |
| Good | Presentation has exactly one misspelling and exactly one grammatical error, which a spell- or grammar checker would not catch |
| Excellent | Presentation has no misspellings or grammatical errors |
| **Eye Contact** | |
| Unacceptable | Presenter reads all of report with no eye contact |
| Acceptable | Presenter occasionally makes eye contact, but still reads most of report |
| Good | Presenter maintains eye contact most of the time but frequently returns to notes |
| Excellent | Presenter maintains eye contact with audience, seldom returning to notes |
| **Elocution** | |
| Unacceptable | Presenter mumbles, incorrectly pronounces terms, and speaks too quietly for audience in the back of room to hear |
| Acceptable | Presenter's voice is low. Presenter incorrectly pronounces terms. Audience members have difficulty hearing presentation. |
| Good | Presenter's voice is clear. Presenter pronounces most words correctly. Most audience members can hear presentation. |
| Excellent | Presenter uses a clear voice and correct, precise pronunciation of terms so that all audience members can hear presentation. |

## Assignments

### *Overview*

This is an overview of the assignments for this course:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Assignment** | **Points** |
| 1 | Attend class and participate in class discussion | 15 |
| 2 | Case presentation | 15 |
| 3 | *Final project* |  |
|  | Project proposal | 5 |
|  | Competitive analysis | 10 |
|  | Content inventory and site map | 10 |
|  | Final report | 35 |
| Final project presentation | 10 |
|  |  | **100** |

### *Requirements for each assignment*

1. Attend class and participate in class discussion

Students are required to physically attend each class and arrive at each class promptly. Class attendance will be graded. If you know that you must miss a class, let me know in advance (up until 24 hours before the class session). If you miss a class session, unexpectedly, get in contact with me ASAP. You are also encouraged to participate in class discussion. Class participation will also be graded.

1. Case presentation

This assignment is designed for us to familiarize ourselves with IA principles and practice analyzing and assessing the IA of a website or application. Each group of students will select one website or an App, which could be desktop- or mobile-based, and present its IA.

The presentation lasts about 10- 15 minutes, followed by a Q&A session. Use visual aids (e.g., PowerPoint) in your presentation. The presentations will be evaluated based on the rubric on p.3.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Presentation case** | **Date of presentation** | **Name** |
| 1 | Website/App 1 | Sep 26 |  |
| 2 | Website/App 2 | Oct 3 |  |
| 3 | Website/App 3 | Oct 10 |  |
| 4 | Website/App 4 | Oct 17 |  |
| 5 | Website/App 5 | Oct 24 |  |
| 6 | Website/App 6 | Oct 31 |  |
| 7 | Website/App 7 | Nov 7 |  |
| 8 | Website/App 8 | Nov 7 |  |
| 9 | Website/App 9 | Nov 14 |  |

1. Final project

This is a group project. Each group can have 4 students at maximum. In this project, you are going to design a web-based solution (websites, web-based applications, or mobile apps) for an organization or for a particular population to serve a particular purpose. The steps and deliverables for this project include:

1. Decide on the website/application you would like to design and the population you would like to serve. Discuss your idea(s) with the instructor.
2. Prepare and submit **a brief proposal** (no more than 1 page) outlining：
   1. The purpose of the site/application
   2. Its scope
   3. Planned design process and activities, including *methods* you plan to use for user/product research and evaluation (e.g., interviews, focus group, cart sorting, user testing, and heuristic evaluation) and *documentations* that you will produce in the process (e.g. personas, concept maps, wireframes, and usability test plans, et al.).
   4. A timeline for completing your project
3. Upon receiving approval from the instructor, work on the project based on your proposal. Perform the tasks that you outlined in your proposal (e.g., conducting competitive analysis, composing content inventory, constructing conceptual maps, designing templates or sample pages, and verifying your design with heuristic evaluation or other lightweight user testing methods) and produce corresponding documentations. You will turn in the following deliverables at different stages of the project:
4. **A competitive analysis**of similar products
5. **A content inventory,** documenting content that will be included in your product
6. **A final report** that includes all documentations that you produce in your design process (including the competitive analysis and content inventory that you turn in earlier. You can modify these documents if needed when compiling them into the final report).
7. **Final presentation** of the project**.** The presentation should include, but not limited to, a graphical view of the website/application, functions of the site/application, rationale for various IA decisions, challenges that you have met, and potentials for improvements. The presentation should be 20 minutes long, with 5-10 additional minutes for Q&A. The grading criteria for this presentation are the same as the criteria for evaluating your individual topic presentations (see p. 3).

## Schedule & Readings

### *Schedule*

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Date** | **Subject** | **Due** |
| 1 | Aug 22 | Introduction |  |
| 2 | Aug 29 | What is IA |  |
| 3 | Sep 5 | \*\*Labor day holiday, no class\*\* | *Project proposal* |
| 4 | Sep 12 | Principles of IA |  |
| 5 | Sep 19 | Search systems and search interface |  |
| 6 | Sep 26 | Metadata and controlled vocabulary | *Competitive analysis* |
| 7 | Oct 3 | Creating controlled vocabulary |  |
| 8 | Oct 10 | IA development process: Research, strategy, and design (1): Context |  |
| 9 | Oct 17 | IA development process: Research, strategy, and design (2): Content |  |
| 10 | Oct 24 | IA development process: Research, strategy, and design (3): User | *Content inventory* |
| 11 | Oct 31 | Credibility and design for credibility |  |
| 12 | Nov 7 | IA development process: Evaluation |  |
| 13 | Nov 14 | Designing for conversation, collaboration, & sharing (social web) |  |
| 14 | Nov 21 | \*\* Thanksgiving holiday, no class\*\* |  |
| 15 | Nov 28 | Work week and final project presentation |  |
| 16 | Dec 5 | Final project presentation | *Final report*  *Final presentation* |

### *Readings*

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Aug 22 **Introduction**  RM&A, Ch 1-2 |
| 2. Aug 29 **What is IA**  RM&A, Ch 3-4  Dillon, A., & Turnbull, D. (2010). Information architecture. In Encyclopedia of Library and  Information Science. (3rd ed). 1:1, 2361-2368.  Toms, E.G. (2002). Information interaction: Providing a framework for information architecture. Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 53(10), 855-862.  **Additional recommended readings**  Dillon, A. (2002). Information architecture in JASIST: Just where did we come from? Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 53(10), 821-823.  Brown, D. (2010). Eight principles of information architecture. Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, 36 (6).  Jacob, E. K., & Loehrlein, A. (2009). Information architecture. Annual Review of Information Science and Technology, 43(1), 1-64. |
| 3. Sep 5 \*\*Labor day holiday, no class\*\* |
| 4. Sep 12 **Principles of IA: Organizing, labeling, and navigation**  RM&A, Ch 5-8 |
| 5. Sep 19 **Search systems and search interface**  RM&A: Ch 9  Wilson, M.L., Kules, B., Schraefel, M.C., & Shneiderman, B. (2010). From keyword search to exploration: Designing future search interfaces for the web. Foundations and Trends in Web Science, 2(1), 1-97. Accessed at: <http://www.cs.swan.ac.uk/~csmax/pubs/FnTWebSci-Wilson.pdf>  Hearst, M. A. (2011). 'Natural' search user interfaces. Communications of ACM, 54(11), 60-67.  **Additional recommended readings**  Doan, K., Plaisant, C., & Shneiderman, B. (1996). Query previews in networked information systems. In Proceedings of the 3rd International Forum on Research and Technology Advances in Digital Libraries, 120.  Greene, S., Marchionini, G., Plaisant, C., & Shneiderman, B. (2000). Previews and overviews in digital libraries: Designing surrogates to support visual information seeking. Journal of the American Society for Information Science, 51(4), 380-393.  Hearst, M. (2006). Design recommendations for hierarchical faceted search interfaces. ACM SIGIR Workshop on Faceted Search. <http://flamenco.berkeley.edu/papers/faceted-workshop06.pdf>  Russell-Rose, Tony, Tate, Tyler (2013). Designing the search experience: The information architecture of discovery. Morgan Kaufmann. [ebook available at UT library] |
| 6. Sep 26 **Metadata & controlled vocabulary**  RM&A: Ch 10  Yee, K.P., Swearingen, K., Li, K., & Hearst, M. (2003). Faceted metadata for image search and browsing. CHI Proceedings 2003, (April 5‐10, 2003, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, USA).  Hearst, M. (2006). Clustering versus faceted categories for information exploration. Communications of the ACM, 49(4), 56-61.  Hedden, H. (2010). Taxonomies and controlled vocabularies best practices for metadata. *Journal of Digital Asset Management*, *6*(5), 279–284. <https://doi.org/10.1057/dam.2010.29>  Weibel, S. L., & Koch, T. (2000). The Dublin Core Metadata Initiative: Mission, Current Activities, and Future Directions. D-Lib Magazine, 6(12). https://doi.org/10.1045/december2000-weibel  **Additional recommended readings**  Morrison, P. J. (2008). Tagging and searching: Search retrieval effectiveness of folksonomies on the world wide web. Information Processing and Management, 44, 1562-1579. |
| 7. Oct 3 **Creating controlled vocabularies**  Leise, F. (2003). Creating a controlled vocabulary. Accessed at: <http://boxesandarrows.com/creating-a-controlled-vocabulary/>  Luckow, R. (2010). Unnamed things: Creating a controlled vocabulary for the description of animated moving image content. *Journal of Digital Asset Management*, *6*(3), 153–157. <https://doi.org/10.1057/dam.2010.13>  Zaharee, M. (2013). Building controlled vocabularies for metadata harmonization. *Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, *39*(2), 39–42. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bult.2013.1720390211> |
| 8. Oct 10 **Development process for IA: Research , strategy, and design (1): Context**  RM&A Ch 11 |
| 9. Oct 17 **Development process for IA: Research, strategy, and design (2): Content**  RM&A: Ch 12 |
| 10. Oct 24 **Development process for IA: Research, strategy, and design (3): User**  RM&A: Ch 13 |
| 11. Oct 31 **Establishing credibility**    Choi, W., & Stvilia, B. (2015). Web credibility assessment: Conceptualization, operationalization, variability, and models. Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology, 66(12), 2399–2414. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.23543>  Metzger, M. J., Flanagin, A. J., Eyal, K., Lemus, D. R., & Mccann, R. M. (2003). Credibility for the 21st Century: Integrating Perspectives on Source, Message, and Media Credibility in the Contemporary Media Environment. Annals of the International Communication Association, 27(1), 293–335. https://doi.org/10.1080/23808985.2003.11679029 |
| 12. Nov 7  **Development process for IA: Evaluation**  Usability 101: <http://www.useit.com/alertbox/20030825.html>  Sillence, E., Briggs, P., Harris, P., & Fishwick, L. (2007). Health websites that people can trust – the case of hypertension. Interacting with Computers, 19, 32-42.  Dekkers T, Melles M, Vehmeijer SBW, de Ridder H. (2021). Effects of Information Architecture on the Effectiveness and User Experience of Web-Based Patient Education in Middle-Aged and Older Adults: Online Randomized Experiment. Journal of Medical Internet Research, 23(3):e15846 doi: [10.2196/15846](https://doi.org/10.2196/15846) |
| 13. Nov 14 **Designing for conversation, collaboration, & sharing (Social web)**  Vaananen, K., & Waljas, M. (2009). Development of evaluation heuristics for web service user experience. CHI 2009, 3679-3684.  Picard, R. W., Wexelblat, A., & Clifford I. Nass, C. I. N. I. (2002). Future Interfaces: Social and Emotional. In Proceedings of CHI (pp. 698-699).  Donath, J. (2014). How Social Media Design Shapes Society. In the Proceedings of CHI '14 Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems (pp. 1057-1058).  **Additional recommended readings**  Crumlish, C. (2009). Designing social interfaces: Principles, patterns, and practices for improving the user experience. (1st ed.). Cambridge: O'Reilly Media. |
| 14. Nov 21 \*\* Thanksgiving holiday, no class\*\* |
| 15. Nov 28 **Work week &** **Final project presentation** |
| 16. Dec 5 **Final project presentation** |

**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. It is a violation of the University’s Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. The University is well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found on such sites that are associated with a specific student, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to [Student Conduct and Academic Integrity](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct) in the [Office of the Dean of Students](https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/). These reports can result in sanctions, including failure of the course.

**Religious Holy Days**

By [UT Austin policy](https://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/academic-policies-and-procedures/attendance/), you must notify me of your pending absence as far in advance as possible to 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.

**Personal Pronoun Preference**

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student’s legal name, unless they have added a “preferred name” with the Gender and Sexuality Center, which you can do so here: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/publications-and-resources/>. 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 gender pronouns you use (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 <https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/633028/pages/profile-pronouns>.

**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.

**University Resources for Students**

*Personal or Family Emergencies*

If you experience a personal or family emergency (death in the family, protracted sickness, serious mental health issues) you should contact Student Emergency Services in the Office of the Dean of Students. As advocates, SES supports students by providing the most comprehensive outreach, assistance, intervention, and referrals. They will also work with you to communicate with me and your other professors and let them know of your situation.

*Services for Students with Disabilities*

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 Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Please refer to SSD’s website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with SSD, 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*

The [Counseling and Mental Health Center](https://cmhc.utexas.edu/index.html) serves UT’s diverse campus community by providing high quality, innovative and culturally informed mental health programs and services that enhance and support students’ well-being, academic and life goals. To learn more about your counseling and mental health options, call CMHC at (512) 471-3515. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, call the CMHC Crisis Line 24/7 at (512) 471-2255.

*The University Writing Center*

The UWC provides free programs to support and empower all UT graduate students. UWC consultants provide one-on-one feedback on any project at any stage of your writing process. For group accountability and instruction, check out UWC monthly writing groups, workshops, and retreats.

*The Sanger Learning Center*

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

*Student Emergency Services*

UT’s [Student Emergency Services](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/) provides assistance, intervention, and referrals to support students navigating challenging or unexpected issues that impact their well-being and academic success. 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, please register with [Student Emergency Services](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/). SES will verify your situation and notify your professors.

**Land Acknowledgment**

We would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Indigenous land. Moreover, we would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to the Carrizo & Comecrudo, Coahuiltecan, Caddo, Tonkawa, Comanche, Lipan Apache, Alabama-Coushatta, Kickapoo, Tigua 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, here on Turtle Island.

**Title IX Reporting**

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When sexual misconduct occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university’s [relevant policies](https://titleix.utexas.edu/policies).

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered “Responsible Employees” or “Mandatory Reporters,” which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX-related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with me or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX-related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email [advocate@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:advocate@austin.utexas.edu) For more information about reporting options and resources, visit the [Title IX Office](https://titleix.utexas.edu) or email [titleix@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:titleix@austin.utexas.edu).

**Campus Safety**

The following are recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the [Office of Campus Safety and Security](https://financials.utexas.edu/about/leadership/avp-campus-safety), 512-471-5767,

* 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 [emergency preparedness](https://preparedness.utexas.edu/).

**Classroom safety and covid-19**

To help preserve our in-person learning environment, the university recommends the following.

* Adhere to university [mask guidance](https://t.e2ma.net/click/fuzy1f/7f70iib/3gdvdxc). Masks are strongly recommended inside university buildings for vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, except when alone in a private office or single-occupant cubicle.
* [Vaccinations are widely available](https://t.e2ma.net/click/fuzy1f/7f70iib/j9dvdxc), free and not billed to health insurance. The vaccine will help protect against the transmission of the virus to others and reduce serious symptoms in those who are vaccinated.
* [Proactive Community Testing](https://t.e2ma.net/click/fuzy1f/7f70iib/z1evdxc) remains an important part of the university’s efforts to protect our community. Tests are fast and free.
* The university has determined that all students coming to campus for the fall semester must receive a viral COVID-19 test in their local community within 72 hours prior to arrival in Austin for move in. If they already reside in Austin, they must test within 72 hours of moving into the residence where they will reside for the academic semester. Finally, individuals who are already living in the residence in Austin where they will reside this academic semester should test within 72 hours (3 days) prior to the start of class on Aug. 25.
* We encourage the use of the  [Protect Texas App](https://protect.utexas.edu/app/) each day prior to coming to campus.
* If you develop COVID-19 symptoms or feel sick, stay home and contact the [University Health Services](https://www.healthyhorns.utexas.edu/)’ Nurse Advice Line at 512-475-6877. If you need to be absent from class, contact [Student Emergency Services](https://t.e2ma.net/click/l02i5z/dmu8psb/9yd5cm4) and they will notify your professors. In addition, to help understand what to do if you have been had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, see this [University Health Services link](https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus_exposure_action_chart.html).
* [Behavior Concerns and COVID-19 Advice Line](https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line) (BCCAL) remains available as the primary tool to address questions or concerns from the university community about COVID-19.
* Students who test positive should contact [BCCAL](https://safety.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line) or self-report (if tested off campus) to [University Health Services](https://healthyhorns.utexas.edu/coronavirus_self_report.html).
* Visit [Protect Texas Together](https://protect.utexas.edu/) for more information.