

**Course:** DMED 520: Projects 1 – 6 credits  
**Term:** Fall 2020  
**Instructor:** Laura Ballay, D'Arcy Smith  
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### Course Goal

- Design, strategize and prototype human-centered digital solutions that follow the iterative design/development process
- Understand the collaborative Production Process
- Successfully complete team-based project work

Every digital media project, from web pages to computer games to digital art, involves creating a narrative space, or *virtual world*. Building large-scale virtual worlds requires an understanding of how to realize creativity in the digital medium, how people see and process information, as well as how to manage a realistic project that can accomplish an elegant solution.

This course will focus on design thinking, production pipeline, user experience and project management techniques based on real-world examples. This course is extremely hands-on with a heavy emphasis on critical thought, design, applied problem solving, and rapid prototyping. The team-based projects will give students the necessary tools, background and experience to be successful at medium and large-scale digital media projects and will prepare students as they move into Projects II.

All MDM project courses are group independent studies, where teams of three to six students work on digital projects during that semester. Projects I focuses on the design and implementation of artifacts in a virtual world in order to solve a client's problem. This rapid immersion into a group problem-solving environment is designed to engage a student in project planning, management and execution. The goal of the course is to provide a solid foundation of problem solving and methodologies that will apply to future industry projects.

### Course Objectives

Upon completion of the Projects 1 course students will be able to:

- Define the problem space and the project goals
- Identify user pain points/needs
- Effectively articulate the problem statement/business challenge
- Identify different user research approaches and their strengths/weaknesses
- Select appropriate user research techniques to validate your solution
- Identify different prototyping approaches and their strengths/weaknesses
- Rapidly iterate design(s) and prototype(s) that solve the identified problem
- Effectively articulate your rationale for your design decisions
- Describe and apply agile methodology
- Effectively apply strategies for team communication, conflict management, and project planning under time constraints
- Produce effective, well-written, and professional (i.e. appropriate for sharing with a client) documentation that provides context, project goals, and rationale for key decisions
- Demonstrate the ability to work in an interdisciplinary team

- Explain and apply the key principles of production management and its use in day-to-day practice
- Create an effective, load-balanced project pipeline
- Demonstrate project planning in their projects
- Deliver a professional project within time and resource constraints.

### Course Topics

- Production and pipeline practices
- Developing business value through primary and secondary research
- Human-centred design (HCD) and ideation
- User Research to validate design decisions
- Iterative Design/Development
- Collaboration via Agile Methodology
- Project management tools and techniques
- Effective Communications and Documentation
- Presentations, pitches, sprint reviews and demos

### Format of the course:

*Projects 1*, also referred to as *Building Virtual Worlds*, is a course in which student teams design and implement artifacts in a digital environment. The projects have an explicit role in teaching project management, iterative design/development, and best practices for team-based creation. The course will include lectures and workshops that will illustrate techniques.

### Suggested Readings:

The following list includes suggested readings. Other relevant topics will be distributed through the *Projects 1* course page on Canvas.

- ***Design of Everyday Things***: Don Norman
- ***About Face 4.0***: Alan Cooper
- ***100 Things Every Designer Needs to Know About People***: Susan Weinschenk
- ***Universal Methods of Design***: Bruce Hanington and Bella Martin
- ***Drawing Ideas***: Mark and William Bardel

### Course Assignments:

Assignments in *Projects 1* are a reflection of the necessary competencies for an effective member of a production team

Note: All assignments due on Thursdays at 10am PST.

Assignment	Due Date
Design Jam Demo	Week 1
Design Jam Demo - Pt 2	Week 2
Demo Day (midterm)	Week 6
Community Critique/Feedback Day	Week 10
Final Project Presentation	Week 12
Final Project Documentation	Week 13

## Assignment in Details:

### Design Jam project

This grade is determined by meaningful contributions to the project team in the context of organization and execution of a design solution.

### Project Documentation

Contributions to the documentation of the projects throughout the course term.

### Mid Term Project Evaluations

Presentation of a complete project plan and prototype for the assigned design brief.

### Collaboration

Throughout the term sharing knowledge and advice with others.

### Final project

Display the ability to respond as a project team to a design problem and deliver a digital artifact with documentation

### Course Schedule:

*Due to the fluid nature of projects and issues that can occur all topics and exercises are subject to change*

Week + Date	Activity
Week 0 - Sept 13	Design Jam Week 0 - Date TBD
Week 1 - Sept 17	Design Jam Retrospective Design Jam iteration  <b>Topics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Course Intro and evaluation</li> <li>• Introduction to Human-Centred Design/Design Thinking/Ideation</li> <li>• Intro to Demo and Sprint Review</li> <li>• Remote Collaboration – Dev</li> </ul> Remote Collaboration - Design & Client
Week 2 – Sept 24	<b>Assignment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design Jam Demo - Pt 2</li> </ul> Project Brief distributed  <b>Topics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agile methodology continued (standups, retrospectives) and tools</li> <li>• Team Dynamics</li> </ul> Project Documentation
Week 3 – Oct 3	<b>Topics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team Collaboration/Team Contracts</li> </ul> Business Value/Agile Statement

Week 4 – Oct 8	<b>Topics:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iterative Design Process/Primary and Secondary Research</li> <li>• Delivery Criteria</li> </ul> Agile Development
Week 5 – Oct 15	<b>Topics:</b> Presenting/Design Critiques (Laura) Presenting/Demos (D’Arcy)
Week 6 – Oct 22	<b>Assignment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demo Day (midterm)</li> </ul> Show Prototype and Project Plan
Week 7 – Oct 29	<b>Topics:</b> User research, high fidelity prototype (Laura) Team 360 (Laura) Project retrospective (D’Arcy)
Week 8 – Nov 5	<b>Topics:</b> Facilitating and actioning feedback (Laura) Technical demo tips (D’Arcy)
Week 9 – Nov 12	<b>Topics:</b> Final Documentation and expectations (Laura, D’Arcy)
Week 10 – Nov 1	<b>Assignment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Critique/Feedback Day</li> </ul> Critique retrospective (D’Arcy)
Week 11 – Nov 26	<b>Topics:</b> Project Delivery expectations (Laura, D’Arcy)
Week 12 – Dec 3	<b>Assignment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Project Presentation</li> </ul>
Week 13 - Dec 10	<b>Assignment:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Project Documentation</li> </ul>

**Attendance:**

Projects 1 is a hybrid at-a-distance course and requires attendance, presence and complete participation for all aspects of the course. You are expected to be fully present and are graded on participation. Students who are unavoidably absent due to illness or disability should notify to their instructors of their situation.

**Evaluation:**

Your grade is determined by these four components. Examples of what is factored into each of these components is described below. Additional components may be added throughout the term. If you need further clarity, please speak with the instructors.

Project* Outcomes: Quality of the problem statement, research insights, and prototype. Responding as a	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iterative process including user research</li> <li>• Business Value</li> </ul>
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project team to a design problem and deliver a digital artifact with documentation.  *Includes Design Jam		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity/"X factor"</li> <li>• Team collaboration</li> <li>• Quality of the work throughout the term (dev and design)</li> </ul>
Communications	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individually engaged in faculty meetings</li> <li>• Team preparation in faculty meetings</li> <li>• Weekly Sprint Review feedback/responses</li> <li>• Quality of Sprint Reviews and Demos</li> <li>• Other informal and formal communication such as presentations and email</li> </ul>
Documentation: Contributions to the documentation of the projects throughout the course term.	20%	<p>Weekly Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrum board</li> <li>• Weekly Retrospective</li> <li>• Key decisions and rationale</li> <li>• Sprint Review (video)</li> <li>• Draft design/technical documents</li> </ul> <p>Final Documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation decks</li> <li>• Key decisions and rationale</li> <li>• User Research Insights</li> <li>• Final retrospective</li> <li>• Design document</li> <li>• Technical document</li> </ul>
Individual Contributions: Equally sharing workload; Sharing knowledge and advice with others	30%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assigned action items completed and well-communicated progress</li> <li>• Team 360s</li> <li>• Team progress/contributions</li> <li>• Discussion threads and Sprint Review feedback</li> <li>• Individual presentation</li> </ul>

**Written & Spoken English Requirement:** Written and spoken work may receive a lower mark if it is, in the opinion of the instructor, deficient in English.

**Laptop & Cell Phone Policy:** The use of laptops and cell phones for connectivity is required. Please respect your classmates and instructors and refrain from text messages, social media, games and videos during class, workshop times, and meeting times. Please note you should have a pen and paper available for meeting times.



**Religious Accommodation:**

The university accommodates students whose religious obligations conflict with attendance, submitting assignments, or completing scheduled tests and examinations. Please let your instructor know in advance, preferably the first week of class, if you will require any accommodations on these grounds.

**Academic Integrity**

MDM considers plagiarism to be the most serious academic offense that a student can commit. Regardless of whether or not it was committed intentionally, plagiarism has serious academic consequences and can result in expulsion from the university. Plagiarism involves the improper use of somebody else's words or ideas in one's own work.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure you fully understand what plagiarism is. Please see the SFU website for an explanation of the various types of plagiarism and to take the plagiarism tutorial: <http://www.lib.sfu.ca/help/writing/plagiarism>

**Grading Profile**

A+	95-100
A	90-94
A-	85-89
B+	80-84
B	75-79
B-	70-74
C+	65-69
C	60-64
F	0 - 59

**Policies**

The student and academic policies of the Masters of Digital Media Program and of Simon Fraser University apply within this course.

Relevant SFU policies can be found at:

- Graduate General Regulations  
[http://students.sfu.ca/calendar/for\\_students/grad\\_regulation.html](http://students.sfu.ca/calendar/for_students/grad_regulation.html)
- Academic Honesty and Student Conduct Policies  
<http://www.sfu.ca/policies/Students/index.html>
- Teaching and Instruction Policies  
<http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/index.htm>
- University Policies (complete site)  
<http://www.sfu.ca/policies>