



# Introduction to User Experience

Instructor: Paul Canetti

E-mail: pc2753@columbia.edu

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Creating a great user experience is essential to any business, and technology companies are using it as a secret weapon to usurp incumbent players in almost every industry. UX can be a key differentiator in that it adds a new dimension that emphasizes not only the product or service itself, but instead the consumer's experience of using that product or service. It is a subtle and often misunderstood distinction with profound implications. UX is an essential skill for those interested in a career in technology and/or product management, but more generally, providing a great experience to your customers is a universal imperative for any business. This course is aimed at those without a strong technical background who want to develop knowledge and skills to get a leg up when founding or joining a technology company.

## COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### 1. User Experience Fundamentals

You will learn what user experience (UX) is as well as examples and common attributes of great experiences. UX creation is generally regarded as a design discipline, but it can and should be practiced by everyone within an organization in order to bridge business objectives with customer needs.

### 2. UX as a Business Differentiator

UX is not only “nice to have” but can be a meaningful business differentiator. We will examine specific cases where UX has allowed companies to rise above the competition and how they were able to achieve those results.

### 3. UX Tools

You will learn practical tools of the trade that UX designers use every day. These are applicable not only for designers but for anyone looking to create a great experience. Tools covered include: user research, personas, journey maps, rapid prototyping, experimentation, wireframing, and user flows.

## **COURSE ROADMAP/SCHEDULE**

### **Session 1**

#### **Defining User Experience**

- Course overview
- Defining UX
- UX as a strategic framework
- Principles of great UX
- User-centered design process

### **Session 2**

#### **UX as a Business Differentiator**

- Review case studies
- Optimizing for customer loyalty
- Differentiation in luxury vs. commodity markets
- Balancing UX goals with business goals
- Creating a UX-centric strategy

### **Session 3**

#### **UX Tools Part 1**

- User Research
  - Qualitative Methods
  - Quantitative Methods
- Working from first principles
- Personas
- Journey Maps

### **Session 4**

#### **UX Tools Part 2**

- Rapid Prototyping
- Experimentation
- Wireframing
- User Flows

### **Session 5**

#### **UX Tools Part 3**

- Best Practices
- Creating Magic
- Decisioning with Data

### **Session 6**

#### **Final Presentations**

- Group presentations of theoretical products with amazing UX
  - Expert panel feedback
  - Open Q&A with the class

## **ASSIGNMENTS/METHOD OF EVALUATION**

Your grade for this course will be based on the following:

**40%** of your grade will be based on the final group presentations.

**60%** of your grade will be based on active participation, attendance, and attention during class lectures, discussions, and activities.

### **Participation**

Coming to class, being attentive, and actively participating are expected and will account for half of your grade. User experience is a participatory discipline. Asking questions, challenging assumptions, and inspiring others are all part of the process. An active classroom will simulate what it is like to work on a product team.

## **REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS**

Throughout the sessions, various case studies, articles, videos, podcasts, and other materials will be assigned as required content to discuss in class.

## **CLASSROOM NORMS AND EXPECTATIONS**

Because of the small number of sessions, attendance at all sessions is required. As they will take place in the evening, eating in class is allowed. No use of phones, tablets, wearables, computers, or other internet-enabled devices allowed in class. Active participation is encouraged.

## **INCLUSION, ACCOMMODATIONS, AND SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS**

At Columbia Business School, we believe that diversity strengthens any community or business model and brings it greater success. Columbia Business School is committed to providing all students with the equal opportunity to thrive in the classroom by providing a learning, living, and working environment free from discrimination, harassment, and bias on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or ability. Students seeking accommodation in the classroom may obtain information on the services offered by Columbia University's Office of Disability Services online at [www.health.columbia.edu/docs/services/ods/index.html](http://www.health.columbia.edu/docs/services/ods/index.html) or by contacting (212) 854-2388.