

Fall 2026
Professional Practice I

Credit Hours: 4

www.evl.uic.edu/mad/

Office Hours:
By Appointment

Lecture/Lab:
Mondays 1.00-6.40pm
EVL / room 2068
ERF / 842 W Taylor st.

Daria Tsoupikova
tsoupi@uic.edu

Description and Objectives

This year-long (Fall & Spring) course provides a foundation in mobile app design and development, with a strong emphasis on user-centered design (UX), research, and the integration of research into the design and development process. Working in teams and in collaboration with a research partner, students participate in the complete research–design–development process of creating a new mobile application.

Students explore current standards and best practices in mobile UI/UX design, user research, interaction design, visual communication, and iOS development. The course takes a hands-on approach, guiding students from research and problem definition through ideation, interface design, prototyping, programming, user testing, and implementation. Students use professional tools including Adobe Creative Suite, Xcode, Swift, Box, Canvas, and other collaborative platforms.

The Fall semester is dedicated primarily to research and design development. Students investigate the research partner's domain, context, existing products and services, target users, competitors, and broader market landscape. Through background research, user research, competitive and market analysis, and synthesis of findings, students identify opportunities and define design directions. They then translate their research into information architecture, user flows, wireframes, visual and interaction design, storyboards, and interactive prototypes. Students present and refine their work through ongoing reviews with instructors and the research partner.

The Spring semester focuses on front-end development of functional mobile app prototypes. Students translate their design solutions into functional iOS applications for iPhone and iPad using Xcode and Swift. They implement interfaces, interactions, and multimedia components; conduct user testing; incorporate feedback; and iteratively refine their functional prototypes. Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Conduct and synthesize research to understand a domain, its users, existing solutions, competitors, and market opportunities.
- Translate research findings into UX and design strategies for mobile applications.
- Design user-centered UI systems, user flows, wireframes, prototypes, and interactive experiences.
- Build functional front-end iOS prototypes using Xcode and Swift.
- Conduct user testing and iterative design based on evaluation and feedback.
- Collaborate effectively in interdisciplinary teams and communicate research, design, and development decisions to research partners.

The course assumes a working knowledge of computers, intermediate design experience, and familiarity with basic web design principles and software. Students work primarily on the Apple Macintosh platform using professional design and development tools. The course also uses online technologies to support research, collaboration, documentation, and development, including Zoom, Box, Canvas.

Required & Recommended Textbooks

iOS Programming. The Big Nerd Ranch Guide by Christian Keur, Aaron Hillegass, 7th ed

Beginning Xcode by Matthew Knott Daniel Bramhall

Mobile Usability by Jakob Nielsen and Raluca Budiu, New Riders

The Elements of User Experience: User-Centered Design for the Web and Beyond by Jesse James Garrett

A Project Guide to UX Design: For user experience designers in the field or in the making by Russ Unger and Carolyn Chandler

Learn Xcode Tools for Mac OS X and iPhone Development by Ian Piper

Typographie by Emil Ruder, Arthur Niggli/Teufen

The Elements of Typographic Style by Robert Bringhurst, Hartley & Marks Publishers

Fall 2026
Professional Practice I

Credit Hours: 4

www.evl.uic.edu/mad/

Office Hours:
By Appointment

Lecture/Lab:
Mondays 1.00-6.40pm
EVL / room 2068
ERF / 842 W Taylor st.

Daria Tsoupikova
tsoupi@uic.edu

Evaluation and Requirements

Your final grade will be based on your performance and collaboration on the group project, weekly assignments, quizzes, peer evaluation, attendance, participation, and your ability and willingness to accept client and faculty feedback. In order to successfully pass the course, students will be expected to complete the activities listed below. Weights listed between parentheses indicate the contribution of the specific component to the final course grade. The course evaluation components listed below are mandatory. Students do not have the option of opting out of any of the activities required for the assessment of these components.

Collaboration (20%):

this component of the final grade is based on your contribution to the class in the form of attendance and active participation. Students are expected to attend every class meeting, arrive on time and stay until the end. Regular and punctual attendance may be used, at the professor's discretion, to make adjustments to the final grade in borderline cases. Active participation will help students achieve the best learning experience. Completing the readings indicated in the class schedule before class, and being fully present during each class will help students actively engage during each class meeting. Active participation includes active engagement during in-class activities and contributions through asking questions or providing answers when material is unclear. The professor will assume that you are well prepared for each class meeting and will feel free to call upon you to provide an answer or comment. Each absence will

be penalized in the case where permission was not granted by the professor ahead of time. More than two (2) absences will result in a reduction of the final grade by one letter grade; with every additional absence, the final grade will drop by an additional grade. Be prepared for a lot of hard work: be prepared to design, research and code, often, and much outside of the class. This course will be difficult but also very much in-depth and useful to prepare your graduation portfolio.

Assignments, Quizzes (30%):

Assignments will be due on Mondays by 10:00 am unless otherwise specified. Project deliverables will have a different deadlines' structure. Any number of unannounced quizzes may be given during the semester at the beginning or end of class. There are no make-ups for assignments or quizzes.

Team Project (50%):

Teams will consist of 3-4 people. Teams will propose their own projects and go through an ideation phase. Ideas will have to be approved by the instructor and a client. Each team will have to submit various deliverables including a project proposal, prototype wireframes and/ or user flow charts, market research, sketches, peer evaluations, simulations, user testing evidence, presentation and final design. Teams are expected to submit all the deliverables in order to receive a final grade on the group project. Members are expected to contribute to every deliverable and be present in ALL group meetings and class presentations. Kindly be aware that peer evaluations can increase your final grade by 5% or reduce it

A (90-100%)	B (80-89%)	C (70-79%)	D (60-69%)	F (0-59.9%)	I
work of exceptional quality and craft	work of overall good quality and craft	work of overall average quality and craft	work of overall poor quality and craft	work is incomplete or missing	an incomplete is given only in the event of extreme or dire circumstances
level of interest and quality of research exceeds expectations	level of interest and quality of research meets expectations	level of interest and quality of research is minimal	level of interest and quality of research is poor	no demonstrated interest or evidence of research	
deep understanding of material and concepts presented	clear understanding of material and concepts presented	vague understanding of material and concepts presented	lacks understanding of material and concepts presented	no understanding of material and concepts presented	
class participation is active and enthusiastic, perfect attendance	class participation is open and attentive, good attendance	class participation is minimal, inconsistent attendance	class participation is nonexistent, weak attendance	class participation is nonexistent, poor attendance	

Fall 2026
Professional Practice I

Credit Hours: 4

www.evl.uic.edu/mad/

Office Hours:
By Appointment

Lecture/Lab:
Mondays 1.00-6.40pm
EVL / room 2068
ERF / 842 W Taylor st.

Daria Tsoupikova
tsoupi@uic.edu

Course Policies

Attendance and Preparation for Class: You are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions with your reading and supplementary materials. Readings are to be completed prior to class.

Laptops, Tablets and Cell Phones:

While this course is centered on mobile technologies, using mobile devices such as cell phones and tablets (even for texting purposes) in class is unprofessional behavior and forbidden in this course. Turn your cell phones to airplane mode while in class. Never answer a phone call in class. Employers will leave you a message or call you back; they also want professionals who know when and when not to take calls. Laptops can only be used for classroom purposes when directed by the professor. Bring your laptops to every class but please leave them in your book bags or closed until needed. Misuse of laptops or mobile devices will be considered a breach of discipline and appropriate action will be initiated by the professor.

Absences: More than two (2) absences will result in a reduction of the final grade by one letter grade; with every additional absence, the final grade will drop by an additional grade.. In the event you have an excused absence, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor and catch up on missed class material.

Letters of Accommodations

Students with an LOA should discuss their individual attendance needs with the instructor prior to the add/drop deadline.

Assignments: In both the professional and academic world, you must meet deadlines. In this class, assignments will be due before next class by 1:00 pm unless otherwise specified. Make sure to double check the submission deadline for every assignment. Assignments submitted after the deadline will be considered late.

Lab Fee

Late Assignments: Late assignments will receive a 15% penalty for the first day they are late, and 10% for each day afterwards . So, if you submit a perfect assignment a day late, you earn $100\% - 15\% = 85\%$; two days late, you earn $100\% - 25\% = 75\%$; and so on. Hardware failure is not an acceptable reason for turning in an assignment late. You should always make a backup of your files.

Software / Hardware

A \$125.00 laboratory fee is required for this course, which is used for the course supporting materials, and supplies (mobile devices, printer paper, copies, media storage, supplies for presentation etc.)

Macintosh (2022 or newer!):

No Windows, or older Macs!

Adobe Creative Suite (XD, Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign)

A mobile device for testing could be helpful but not necessary (iPhone)

UIC web account / Google account / Box account / Zoom account

LinkedIn Training Tutorials UIC (free)

Canvas

Box

Electronic Communication Mantra

If it's a grade, quizz or test it's on Canvas

if it's any schedule, link, assignment description, it's on the class website;

if it's a file upload/download, video, assignmet submission folder, it's on the Box.

Fall 2026
Professional Practice I

Credit Hours: 4

www.evl.uic.edu/mad/

Office Hours:
By Appointment

Lecture/Lab:
Mondays 1.00-6.40pm
EVL / room 2068
ERF / 842 W Taylor st.

Daria Tsoupikova
tsoupi@uic.edu

Campus Resources

Academic Integrity

UIC is committed to providing an environment in which research, learning, and scholarship can flourish and in which all endeavors are guided by academic and professional integrity. All members of the campus community—students, staff, faculty, and administrators—share the responsibility of ensuring that these standards are upheld so that such an environment exists. Instances of academic misconduct will be handled pursuant to the Student Disciplinary Policy.

Counseling Center

UIC is committed to helping students deal with stress, handle a crisis or trauma, cope with the transition to college, gain strength from gender and cultural identity, or manage mental illness and other issues. Our counselors can help students increase resilience and positive well-being by developing effective coping and problem-solving skills. Click the link to make an appointment.

Disability Resource Center

UIC is committed to full inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of university life. Students who face or anticipate disability-related barriers should use the link to connect with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Instructors in receipt of a Letter of Accommodation will work with the student and the DRC to implement the approved accommodations.

Office for Access and Equity

UIC is committed to providing access to employment, programs, and services in an environment free of unlawful discrimination and harassment. Dispute Resolution Services (DRS) provides confidential consultation, facilitation, and mediation services to students, faculty, academic and support staff.

Nondiscrimination Policy Statement

UIC is committed to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity involving students and employees. Freedom from discrimination is a foundation for all decision-making at UIC. Students are encouraged to click the link to review the statement.

Grievance Procedures

UIC is committed to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity involving students and employees. Freedom from discrimination is a foundation for all decision making at UIC. Students are encouraged to study the University's "Nondiscrimination Statement." Information on grievance policies and procedures is available on the University web pages of the Office of Access and Equity: www.uic.edu/depts/oea.

Special Needs

Any individuals with learning disabilities or special needs must make the instructor aware of them prior to the due date of the first major assignment. Those who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Disability Resource Center. Please contact DRC at 312/413-2183 (voice) or 773-649-4535 (VP/Relay) and consult the following: <http://drc.uic.edu/>.

Letters of Accommodations

Students with an LOA should discuss their individual attendance needs with the instructor prior to the add/drop deadline.

Disclaimer

Projects created in this course may be used by the Department for purposes of promotion for students, the School or the University in general. The School may also use these materials for instructional purposes in future courses.

Fall 2026
Professional Practice I

Credit Hours: 4

www.evl.uic.edu/mad/

Office Hours:
By Appointment

Lecture/Lab:
Mondays 1.00-6.40pm
EVL / room 2068
ERF / 842 W Taylor st.

Daria Tsoupikova
tsoupi@uic.edu

Campus Safety

UIC is committed to public safety, and provides UIC Alerts for real-time news and a free smartphone app that allows students to take advantage of the many campus safety services offered. Please download the appropriate app to your smartphone—Apple (UIC SAFE) or Android (UIC Mobile)—and familiarize yourself with its features so you're prepared in case of an emergency. In addition to the features listed below, the app also contains a full Safety Toolbox, Support Resources, and Emergency Response Guidelines.

Panic Button

one-touch button to silently send your location to UIC Police

Friend Virtual Walk

real-time tracking with a contact of your choice

UIC Police Virtual Escort

real-time tracking with UIC Police, available 24 hours/every day

Walking Safety Escort

in-person Student Patrol or UIC Police campus escort, available 24 hours/every day
use app or dial direct 312-996-2830

Work Alone

alert sent to a contact of your choice if you fail to respond to a designated check-in

Safe Commute

Night Ride—a campus shuttle van will give you a ride, available 11 pm–7 am/every day
use app or dial direct 312-996-6800

Report

Call UIC Police—use app, dial direct 312-355-5555 or from a campus phone 5-5555
Report Crime/Submit Tip—use app to report criminal incident, misconduct, or harassment
Chat with UIC Police—use app to share information, request assistance, or ask a question
Call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline—available 24 hours/every day use app or dial direct 800-273-8255