

## LMC 6650 Project Studio: Digital Craft

Project Studio - 91420 - LMC 6650 - MN

Fall 2018

Michael Nitsche [michael.nitsche@gatech.edu](mailto:michael.nitsche@gatech.edu)

Where? TSRB 317C/ Skiles 02

When? 9:30 am - 10:45 am Mo + Wed

### Outline

*“Craft, art, and design are words heavily laden with cultural baggage. For me, they all connote the profound engagement with materials and process that is central to creativity. Through this engagement form, function, and meaning are made tangible. It is time to move beyond the limitations of terminologies that fragment and separate our appreciation of creative actions, and consider the ‘behaviors of making’ that practitioners share.”* David Revere McFadden

What can media and interaction design learn from craft practice? Traditional crafting techniques have long socio-technological histories, deeply personal stories, peculiar practices, amazing materials, and mysterious tools. This course combines theory and discussion with experiential learning and speculative intervention. That means, students will discuss scholarly work from HCI (e.g. Experimental Knowledge and Tangible Interaction) and Craft Research (e.g. “Critical Craft” and Neocraft). In parallel, we will develop practical explorations and interventions following more applied threads (e.g. Speculative Design and Critical Making).

A central component will be a craft-centered final project during which students will trace creative practices of individual crafters to ultimately design and implement their own prototype responses.

The course should speak to students interested in tangible interaction design, from soft circuits to paper computing, especially those who want to explore new paths in this area. Students should expect in-class discussions of readings and projects, critical reflections and design reviews, and a hands on encounter of craft practices that leads to a final project exemplifying your approach to hybrid craft.

Students should expect to use elements of physical computing (e.g. Arduino) but the course is not focused on any single technology.

### Contact

[michael.nitsche@gatech.edu](mailto:michael.nitsche@gatech.edu)

TSRB 316B

p 404 894 7000

Office hours Mo 1-2

### Goals

The projected learning outcomes of this course are:

- To explore and experiment with Craft as a lens into Digital Media
- To learn how to use discussion as well as design sketches and practical prototypes as argumentative material
- To learn, apply, and reflect upon the necessary technology in the implementation of the final project
- To inform argumentation about digital media in the nexus of art, design, and craft

## Textbooks

There is no single textbook but related books include:

- Adamson, Glenn, ed. 2010. *The Craft Reader*. Oxford, UK, New York Berg.
- Alfoldy, Sandra, ed. *NeoCraft: Modernity and the Crafts*. Halifax, CAN: The Press of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design.
- Dormer, Peter, ed. 1996. *The Culture of Craft: Status and future*. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press.
- McCullough, Malcolm. 1998. *Abstracting Craft: The Practiced Digital Hand*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Whenever possible, the readings will be online as .pdf.

## Schedule

(adjustments are bound to happen)

	Field/ question/ method	
8/20	How did we get here?	
8/22	What is “craft”?	Shiner; Dormer
8/27	What is “craft-based inquiry” in HCI? <b>DUE: IRB certification</b>	Frankjaer/Dalsgaard
8/29	How to “look at” materials? <b>Exercise:</b> bring in a material and present its properties and possibilities	Karana; Wiberg
9/3	Labor Day	
9/5	<b>MoDa visit</b>	
9/10	<b>Vocabulary/ Exploration:</b> Bannon – What is the “turn to practice”? Adamson – What is “Thinking Through Craft”? Nimkulrat – What is “experiential knowledge” in design? Schön – What is the “reflective practitioner”? Ratto – What is “critical making”? Groth/Berg – What is “co-creation” in craft?	
9/12	<b>Vocabulary/ Exploration:</b> continued	
9/17	How to think “with iron”?	Keller&Keller
9/19	<b>Vocabulary/ Practice/ Exploration</b> Ingold/ Hallam – What is “cultural improvisation”? Richards – What do we “center”? Oliver – Is craft “performing”? Bødker – What is “activity theory” for HCI? Ingold – What is “knowing from the inside”? Pye – What is “risk”?	

	Morris – Why should we “produce beauty”? Polanyi – What is “tacit knowledge”? <b>OR:</b> Present a material intervention (re-use of your material exploration as a hybrid version)	
9/24	<b>Vocabulary/ Practice/ Exploration</b> continued	
9/26	What is “hybrid” about crafting? <b>Debate:</b> Why combine digital with traditional practices in the first place?	Zoran/Buechley; Frayling
10/1	<b>DUE: Own crafter presentations</b> <b>Presentation</b>	
10/3	<b>DUE: Own crafter presentations</b> <b>Presentation</b> (continued)	
10/8	Recess	
10/10	What is “need”?	Risatti
10/15	<b>DUE: Own paper presentations:</b> <b>examples of digital craft</b>	
10/17	<b>DUE: Own paper presentations:</b> <b>examples of digital craft</b>	
10/22	Does craft need a “social context”?	Greer; Morris/ Marx?
10/24	What is “vital”?	Simondon
10/29	<b>DUE: project idea presentation</b>	
10/31	<b>DUE: project idea presentation</b>	
11/5	Work on projects – individual catch up with MN	
11/7	Work on projects – individual catch up with MN	
11/12	<b>DUE: prototypes presented in class</b> (tech presentation of the how/ what/ why’s)	
11/14	<b>DUE: prototypes presented in class</b> (tech presentation of the how/ what/ why’s)	
11/19	Work on projects – individual catch up with MN	
11/21	Recess	
11/26	Work on projects – individual catch up with MN	
11/28	<b>DUE: Project and critical reflection</b> (presentation) – in class with discussion	
12/3	Last instruction day <b>DUE: Project and critical reflection</b> (presentation) – in class with discussion	

12/5	Exam week (no meeting) <b>DUE: documentation</b> (video, writings, paper, visual documentation)	
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### Grading and Main Deliverables

Assignment	Description	% of final grade
Assigned Paper presentations (2)	Students will present on a particular question related to specific texts/ authors; each presentations should provide an answer to the question posted (or a different perspective to it) and provide the necessary academic background for us to understand that reply; the goal is to assemble a wide vocabulary for all students to use; each presentation should be about 17-20 minutes and end with some open discussion points to allow the rest of the class to connect and follow up. You hand in: ppt slides online	20% (10% each)
OR		
Material intervention	(replaces <b>only the second paper presentation</b> ) Students will build a hybrid material approach to the material they have encountered before; this includes speculative design on possible novel usage, possible alteration of the material; present as much implemented change/ intervention as possible; present ideas of possible future use of this altered/ re-imagined materil. You hand in: ppt slides online	10% (replaces 10% of second paper presentation above)
Own paper presentation	Presentation of self-selected research paper in the field of hybrid craft; each presentation should cover background; field, method, logic of the paper; critical review with clear argumentation; clarity; quality presentation (slides, delivery); ability to answer questions; the goal is to provide the whole class an overview over concept and technology of a specific hybrid craft project as inspiration and background information You hand in: ppt slides online + paper as pdf	10%
Critical reflection (presentation)	Critically reflect on the project underway; use the terminology and means introduced in the first stage of the course; look out for: clarity of presentation and argument, use of terminology, and an effective reflection of the project; this is not "only" a project showing but a critical review of your project that puts it in dialogue with the issues we discussed in class	10%
Final project	Crafter presentation, clarity and ambition of the concept; implementation; process (effective work over	30%

	time); each project needs a short YouTube style <b>video</b> (~ 2 min) that explains its nature, evolution, and results You hand in: >10 images of the project in process; >10 images of final project; all development materials (ppts, design docs, sketches); video – all online For PhD: short (2-3 pages) critical reflection paper on project: use ACM template; use course readings as references + reach beyond course assignment (this will be ~1/3 of your final project grade) You hand in: written paper online	
Participation	active in discussions, active in example sessions; active in design meetings, teamwork, homework; activity and engagement in all meetings;	30%

No use of cell phones (including texting) in class.

100-90% = A  
89-78% = B  
77-64% = C  
63- = D

Grading of individual pieces will be in percentage

Late submissions lead to automatic reductions of the grade unless a valid excuse is provided. Any 1 day delay, meaning anything after 5pm of the due day, will have 10% reduced from the grade; any 2 day delay will have 20% reduced, 3 day delays will not be accepted.

The Honor Code of Georgia Tech applies (see <http://www.honor.gatech.edu/>).

## Inclusivity Statement

The Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts supports the Georgia Institute of Technology's commitment to creating a campus free of discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. We further affirm the importance of cultivating an intellectual climate that allows us to better understand the similarities and differences of those who constitute the Georgia Tech community, as well as the necessity of working against inequalities that may also manifest here as they do in the broader society.

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