

DSGN-3301-1

Interpretive Design

Fall 2024

Instructors: Robert Currie John deWolf
rcurrie@nscad.ca jdewolf@nscad.ca

Class information: Thursdays 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
Sept 12-Dec 12
Port, P214
3 Credits

Course Description:

Interpretive design is a multidisciplinary approach to design that focuses on creating engaging and informative experiences for visitors in cultural, environmental and interpretive settings such as museums, visitor centres, historic and heritage sites, nature reserves, and cultural institutions. This course explores the realm of design as a tool for storytelling, cultural expression, and the conveyance of complex concepts. Students will learn to understand and craft accessible, engaging, and meaningful narratives and visually communicate them through various design mediums and outcomes that may include interactive experiences such as, installations, displays and exhibits.

NSCAD Covid-19 Update

- If you are unwell, please stay at home and let your instructors know if you will be missing class time. If you test positive for COVID-19, you should self-isolate until you test negative or are symptom free and inform your instructors about your situation.
- Please note that as of May 1, 2023, masks are no longer required in indoor instructional spaces.

Student Workload/Course Expectations:

Total student workload for a 3 credit course is estimated to be 9 hours/week, including scheduled class time.

Course Format:

This will be conducted in person. Students will be expected to attend weekly classes, participate in class exercises and discussions, and submit frequent assignments. Mandatory site visits or field trips may also be included. All course projects need to be completed in full by the set due dates.

Course Requirements, Resources, Materials:

Materials:

Students are required to have a Mac or Windows computer capable of running the current version of Adobe Creative Cloud, a reliable, unrestricted internet connection, and the education version of the Adobe CC suite installed for the duration of the class.

NSCAD Attendance Policy:

To achieve this course's learning objectives, students are required to attend and participate in classes, according to your instructor's requirements. For studio and non-lecture courses: many of the topics and content delivered in this course will be taught through class demonstrations, discussions, and activities. As such, your attendance and participation are essential to your successful learning process. *However, students should NOT attend in person classes if they are experiencing symptoms consistent with COVID-19, if they have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or if they are feeling unwell.*

Students should familiarise themselves with their course's attendance policies and pay special attention to their instructor's guidelines regarding attendance requirements. Your instructor will provide information on the attendance policy specific to this course. *In case of illness or COVID-related symptoms, please contact your instructor immediately by email to discuss options for completing your course work.*

Students will not be penalised for having to self-isolate during illness. In this event, course materials and assignment will be made available for completion in an alternative way to be communicated to you by your instructor

NSCAD University Occupational Health and Safety Policy:

At NSCAD safety is a priority. All students are required to obtain and maintain up-to-date safety (WHMIS) certification. An on-line Brightspace certification process is available to all NSCAD students.

Please note that your NSCAD ID card needs an up-to-date Health and Safety (WHMIS) sticker to access shops and

studios, and for Security to permit you access to the university campus sites after hours. WHMIS training is provided online through students' Brightspace account.

Evaluation Criteria:

Completion of all assignments is mandatory. Evaluation will be based on a number of assignments, quizzes, and a research/essay assignment. Participation in class will also account for a portion of the grade.. Dates and details will be provided in the course outline and as the course progresses. All work must be submitted entirely in English.

Grade Weights

Assignments (total): 90%

Class participation: 10%

Assignments:

Individual reading assignments (periodic): 10%
Plan development (Group, (mid-term)) 40%
Schematic design assignment: (individual, end of term) 40%

Grading System:

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent	Grade Point Score	Descriptive Term
A+	95 and above	4.3	Excellent
A	90-94	4.0	Excellent
A-	85-89	3.7	Very Good
B+	80-84	3.3	Very Good
B	73-79	3.0	Good
B-	67-72	2.7	Good
C+	63-66	2.3	Satisfactory
C	59-62	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	55-58	1.7	Satisfactory
D	50-54	1.0	Marginal
F(Fail)	49 and below		

Academic Integrity:

A climate and culture of academic integrity is an expectation of everyone. Students at NSCAD are required to comply with standard academic practices in acknowledging sources in all work presented for academic credit.

New Academic Integrity Policy

Please be sure to read NSCAD's NEW Academic and Integrity Policy: <https://navigator.nscad.ca/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/3.5-Academic-Integrity-Policy-Final.pdf>

Note on use of machine learning/artificial intelligence tools

Machine learning and artificial intelligence tools (such as ChatGPT, dall-e, midjourney, and many others) are evolving rapidly. These tools generate text, images, computer code or other media by recombining elements of existing works.

The NSCAD Academic Integrity policy is clear. Use of such tools without fully crediting the source is a violation of NSCAD's plagiarism policy. Punishments range up to a mark of zero for the assignment, failing the course or expulsion from NSCAD. Material created, in whole or in part, by tools like ChatGPT or other similar AI/ Large Language Models (or any other software to generate text, images or other media) cannot, ever, be considered your own work.

Each assignment will have clear rules for use of media and citations. Ask if you have any questions, and keep in mind the basic rule: all work you submit must be your own, unless the assignment includes clear written instructions stating otherwise.

Copyright notice:

All materials used in this course and distributed within the Brightspace Course Management System are subject to the Canadian Copyright Act and NSCAD's Use of Copyright Materials Policy. <https://tinyurl.com/y8h3lk8j>

Copyrighted materials include, but are not limited to, the following: recorded lectures, notes, books, poems, essays, articles, audio and video recordings, works of art and images. These materials are to be used only for private study, and research. Creating copies or redistributing these course materials without the permission of the copyright owner may be an infringement of copyright law.

Fair Dealing usage guidelines as outlined in NSCAD's Copyright guide are here: <https://guides.nscad.ca/copyright-pages/fairdealing>

Please see NSCAD's Copyright Guide for guidelines and contact information

<https://guides.nscad.ca/copyrightpages/home>

Design Students' Personal Hardware, Software, English Language Settings (HSELS) Requirements:

Please review the document attached to this outline, which sets out the requirements for a computer for design courses at the **2000 level and above**.

Schedule

September 4	Orientation: New Undergraduate Students
September 5	Orientation: New Graduate Students
September 6	Monday Fall semester classes begin (Friday following Monday schedule)
September 9	Fall semester classes begin
September 16	Last day to add a course
September 23	Courses dropped recorded on transcripts as 'W'
September 30	University closed: Truth and Reconciliation Day
October 14	University closed: Thanksgiving
October 18	Faculty mid-semester warning
November 4	Last day to drop course with a 'W'
November 11	University closed: Remembrance Day
November 11-15	No classes: Mid-semester break
November 14-15	In service days (faculty and staff)
December 9	Last day of classes
December 10-18	Assessment period (flex/study/exams/critiques)
December 20	End of fall 2024 term

Writing Centre:

The NSCAD Writing Centre in D230 offers professional tutoring for any kind of written assignment, at any level of study, at any stage of the work. Specialised workshops will also be offered during the term. Please see the Writing Centre web page for more information and booking online at <https://nscad.ca/student-experience/academic-resources/writing-centre/>.

Accessibility Policy:

Accommodations can be arranged for disability-related needs by contacting accessibility@nscad.ca. Students are encouraged to connect with the Accessibility Office as early in the term as possible. Students can connect with the Accessibility Office at any point in the semester or time as a NSCAD student to access or learn more about the available supports. Visit: <https://nscad.ca/student-experience/academic-resources/accessibility/> for more information and to find the Accessibility Policy which includes a protocol that clearly outlines everyone's roles and responsibilities in the accommodation process.

Spiritual/ Religious Observance:

Requests for accommodations for spiritual or religious observances must be presented in writing to the instructor within the first two weeks of class.

Need support/help?

NSCAD is aware of the challenges caused by COVID-19 and is concerned about our students' health and well-being. Here are some resources to help you have a successful and productive academic term:

[COVID-19 Information and Updates](#)

[Wellness Resources](#)

[Counselling and Psychological Services](#)

[Writing Centre](#)

[Financial Aid](#)

[SUNSCAD Food Bank](#)

[The Learning Commons](#)

Design Students' Personal Hardware, Software, English Language Settings (HSELS) Requirements:

Required computer hardware

Apple computers are the predominant choice for the design profession, and that's why the Division of Design instructs using Apple technology. Students are required to purchase a laptop (a MacBook Pro is strongly recommended) and install specified software prior to commencing the program.

All current Apple MacBook Pros can run the required software for the Design program. Students should consider buying an Apple laptop with the fastest available processing speed, along with any RAM upgrade that the student can afford to buy. 32GB of RAM (or more), and at least 512GB of flash storage are recommended for new laptop purchases. In the long run, the initial expense for greater RAM and storage will be offset by improved software performance and lifespan.

If the student already owns or vastly prefers a Windows-platform laptop that is powerful enough to serve, the Division of Design has no objection to using it. However, the bulk of faculty and technician experience is Mac-based; issues with a Windows machine will not be resolved by NSCAD. The student will be responsible for managing any cross-platform issues that arise. Furthermore, a student's inability to complete specified course work due to working on a Windows-platform laptop will not be an acceptable excuse for failing to meet a course's requirements; this situation could cause a student to receive a below average grade, if not fail a course.

Where to purchase:

Students can configure and purchase an Apple laptop online, via Apple's Online Higher Education Store at https://www.apple.com/ca_edu_93120/store.

Students can also visit an Apple retail store, if preferred. If shopping in person, make sure to mention that it is an educational purchase (be sure to have proof of enrolment or student ID).

If a student is purchasing elsewhere, prices should be compared with Apple pricing; generally, Apple's educational pricing offers the best value.

Please note—Extended warranty coverage:

Students are strongly encouraged to purchase the AppleCare Protection Plan, rather than other service plans offered by certain retailers. More information is available here: <https://www.apple.com/ca/support/products/mac/>

Required Adobe software

NSCAD has a low-cost, all-access pass for students to the Adobe Creative Cloud. See <https://nscad.brightspace.com/d2l/le/content/6606/viewContent/124039/View>

Students will install at a minimum: Adobe InDesign, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, and Adobe Acrobat Pro. Other applications may be needed for future courses but those four are the core applications in the degree program. While there are many other graphic design software packages available, knowledge of the Adobe suite is currently a requirement for the design profession.

Apple computers come standard with their office software suite: Pages, Keynote, and Numbers. These programs open and edit equivalent Microsoft Office files.

NSCAD software licenses (applicable to Fall 2024 Term)

Adobe licenses are provided to all NSCAD students.

Required and recommended hardware and internet service plan:

Hardware accessories. Students are encouraged to buy a mouse to go with their laptop; many students find working solely with the trackpad challenging. If the student works with a 3D modelling software, such as Autodesk Rhino, a mouse will be necessary.

Drawing Tablets (\$99.95 and up) are useful tools but not required. Some packages include a tablet, mouse, and stylus.

External monitor for laptop users. Many students with laptops report frustration when working in design applications with dense or cluttered UIs (user interfaces: floating panels, tools, etc.). The Division of Design recommends that laptop users consider purchasing an external monitor compatible with the capabilities of their computer. A minimum recommendation would be an inexpensive flat panel display with a native resolution of at minimum 1920 pixels by 1080 pixels (HD). These displays typically measure 21.5–27 inches diagonally, with prices starting around CAD\$150.

Data backup. It is critical that all students have a reliable backup strategy. Data backup is part of workflows in all professional design practices, for this reason a data management routine needs to be part of a student's plan for completing and keeping all course work. The following backup strategies afford quick data recovery, particularly at the greatest moment of need:

Cloud-based storage, such as Dropbox, OneDrive, or Google's Backup and Sync ensures that work/data is safe and always accessible, for example, if a student's hardware is damaged beyond repair, or lost due to theft they can resume working with new equipment in minimal time.

Another strategy is an external, directly connected hard drive. **Apple users** should set their external drive to automatically backup using Apple's free Time Machine utility. See <https://support.apple.com/en-ca/HT201250> for setup steps.

Windows users should read about Windows backup options. See https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/backup-and-restore-in-windows-352091d2-bb9d-3ea3-ed18-52ef2b88cbef#WindowsVersion=Windows_11 and also consider third-party and/or cloud-based backup strategies.

***Please note** that some professors may not grant a project extension if an assignment is lost due to the absence of an active backup process.*

Minimum recommendations for internet access speed. Successful online participation with fellow students, faculty, and remote tools and resources can be frustrating if a student's internet access speeds are low. It is recommended that an internet service plan with a minimum download speed of 20 megabits per second (Mbps), and a minimum upload speed of 8–10 Mbps. There are free internet speed test websites that will measure your download and upload speeds, such as speedtest.net and fast.com.

NSCAD recognizes that internet access speed might be beyond student control, due to geographical considerations, budget, limited service provider offerings, etc.

Required: English language operating system and software

(International students): All students are required to have an English language operating system on their laptop with all software operating in the English language.

If a student is using an existing computer and software that both meet the requirements listed in this document but it does not operate with the English-language setting, they will need to visit a computer service/repair shop to have it properly initialized in the operating system and software. If the student is residing in Halifax, this must be done locally, see the following list of service providers:

Halifax Computer Repair Shops, Assessment fee: \$45 – \$95 (base charge):
Brilliance Computers 902.453-0050
Century Computer 902.423-2500
Halifax Computer Repair 902.444-2615

NSCAD University does not service or repair computer hardware or software.

NSCAD financial support/Student bursaries:

NSCAD is committed to eliminating barriers to acquiring these required hardware and software course tools based on financial hardship. The Office of Student Experience may

be able to provide a bursary to students in need. Please contact the Manager of Financial Aid ose@nscad.ca for more information.