

User Experience (UX) Design

Professional Certificate

UC San Diego

EXTENDED STUDIES

Program Overview

In today's tech-driven world, the demand for skilled User Experience (UX) designers is growing. UX design combines research, data analysis, and the psychology of human-computer interaction to create user-friendly, functional, and visually appealing products.

The [User Experience Design Certificate](#) provides practical training in UX principles, industry-standard tools, and advanced techniques. Graduates leave with a strong portfolio, the confidence to enhance their current roles, or the skills to pursue careers as Junior UX Designer.

Program Audience

This program is ideal for:

- Professionals looking to enhance or expand UX skills.
- Those with strong critical thinking, research, and data analysis abilities.
- Aspiring UX professionals aiming for roles like UX Designer, UX Researcher, Interaction Designer, or Product Designer.
- Individuals with basic knowledge of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI). (Take a free [Human Centered Design](#) Coursera course to meet this suggested prerequisite) [[link](#)].

Program Benefits

- **Fully Online:** Complete the program from anywhere through an asynchronous format with optional live interactions.
- **Hands-On Training:** Gain real-world experience with projects that build your portfolio.
- **Expert Instructors:** Learn from seasoned professionals who provide personalized guidance.
- **Career Growth:** Acquire skills to advance in your current role or transition to a UX-focused career.
- **Comprehensive Curriculum:** Cover UX fundamentals, emerging technologies, and AI applications.
- **Quick Completion:** Finish in as little as one year with flexible start dates.
- **Accredited:** Earn a certificate from a top-rated, accredited institution.
- **Networking:** Build connections within the UX community.
- **Cutting-Edge Skills:** Stay ahead with the latest tools and industry practice.

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Learning Objectives

- Master user interface principles and human-computer interaction.
- Conduct user research, including usability testing and data analysis.
- Design responsive websites with HTML, CSS, and Bootstrap.
- Create wireframes, prototypes, and interfaces.
- Build a professional UX portfolio with case studies and user journeys.
- Develop a personal brand, resume, and career assets.
- Apply industry best practices to real-world challenges.

Program Details

Prerequisites: No prerequisites required although a basic understanding of Human Centered Design is recommended (Free course here [\[link\]](#)).

Requirements: Complete seven courses: four core courses, two electives, and the capstone **UX Design Portfolio**. The program can be completed in one year, depending on your course selections.

Course Title	Course No.	Units	Course Offered			
			Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Core Courses (Four required plus Portfolio)						
Principles of User Experience (UX)	ART-40638	4.0	Online	Online	Online	Online
UX Design I: Research Methods	ART-40639	4.0		Online		Online
UX Design: Real World Prototyping	ART-40642	4.0	Online		Online	
Responsive Design and User Experience (UX)	ART-40640	4.0		Online		Online
User Experience (UX) Design Portfolio	ART-40641	4.0	Online		Online	
PLUS Two Elective Courses: CSE-41207 Introduction to HTML and CSS CSE-41208 Introduction to JavaScript CSE-40028 Introduction to Programming CSE-41157 Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and Marketing CSE-41260 User Experience (UX) Metrics ART-40535 User Interface Design CSE-40861 Humanizing Social Robots						

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About the Certificate

- **Can I complete the program entirely online?**
Yes, all coursework is fully online, accessible through Canvas, a learning portal.
- **Is the program self-paced?**
Courses are asynchronous but follow a set sequence, with weekly deadlines for assignments and projects.
- **How long does it take to complete the certificate?**
The program takes approximately four quarters, or one year, with the portfolio course tying together your skills.
- **Can I complete it while working full-time?**
Yes, the program is designed for working professionals.
- **Is the program accredited?**
Yes, UC San Diego is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).

About the Courses

- **Will I get personalized feedback from a UX professional?**
Yes, our instructors all work in the industry and they will give you weekly feedback on assignments and help guide you throughout the program. .
- **When will I get access to my course?**
On the first day of class.
- **Are courses transferrable?**
Transferability depends on the receiving institution.
- **How long are the courses?**
Four-unit courses run 10 weeks; three-unit courses last 9 weeks.
- **How much time will I need weekly?**
Plan for 10-16 hours per week.
- **Who develops and teaches the courses?**
Experienced industry professionals.
- **Will I get hands-on experience?**
Yes, courses include practical, project-based exercises.

Testimonials

- *Instructors are very professional, knowledgeable, helpful, and responsive. Any time I needed help, they answered all of my questions clearly and with excellent solutions.*
- *The program involves creating a complete portfolio, from basic brand identity and product ideas to designing the interface of main pages and conducting research. It offers a comprehensive approach within a relatively short timeframe.*
- *I liked that the instructor responded promptly to emails. I liked receiving the feedback because it helped improve my deliverables.*
- *I would like to note the deep involvement of the instructor in the process of review, dialogue, and advice for improvement. This is very valuable to me.*
- *I really like how it is self paced - I love the idea of the portfolio – it allows us as designers to take a step inside our field.*

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Meet Your Instructors



Kris Secor

Kris is a developer, educator, and longtime program advisor for the UX, Web, and Graphic Design programs at UC San Diego Extended Studies. With over 12 years of experience in online instruction and curriculum development, Kris is dedicated to creating engaging, collaborative learning environments—especially for technical subjects. His focus is on simplifying challenging topics through thoughtful instruction and the use of innovative educational technologies.



Donna Sandsmark

Donna is a seasoned project manager, UX designer, and developer with a passion for technology and education. Her career spans roles in both industry and freelance, where she leads digital projects and guides NetSuite implementations. As an educator, Donna is known for breaking down technical topics and boosting student confidence in web and UX design. She brings deep knowledge in HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and responsive design—and when she's not teaching or building, she's on the soccer field or volunteering in animal rescue.



Nick Adkins

Nick brings a dynamic blend of design, development, and education to the classroom. With over a decade of experience in graphic design, web development, and training, he's passionate about making complex concepts approachable and empowering learners through hands-on instruction. A lifelong sports enthusiast and team player, Nick holds a B.A. in Web Design and Interactive Media and currently works as a training specialist and long-time faculty member at UC San Diego Extended Studies.

For More Information

Visit the certificate page or email unex-digital@ucsd.edu for program-specific questions. For administrative assistance, contact unex-reg@ucsd.edu or call (858) 534-3400.