



# UX Design

CAREER TRACK SYLLABUS

2023



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# Overview

UX designers have the ability to touch the lives of millions of people and make each of those lives better. The **Springboard UX Design Career Track** will help you develop a design-thinking mindset to empathize with user needs and create dynamic, easy-to-use products.

You'll execute each phase of the design process and shore up your skills through project-based learning. You will also receive support on your learning journey through mentorship, career coaching, and a Springboard community of learners.

# Overview

## What You'll Learn

Over the course of six months, you'll:

- Demonstrate your knowledge of the User-Centered Design (UCD) process.
- Conduct user research and identify design problems.
- Sketch solutions, design wireframes, build high-fidelity mockups, and create prototypes.
- Perform usability tests and iterate on your prototypes.

## How You'll Learn

- **An online curated curriculum** helps you absorb design principles, industry tools, and best practices.
- **Project-based learning** applies your knowledge to 3 portfolio projects including a design sprint and capstone project.
- **The industry design project** will allow you to apply your skills in the field by working with a real client and design team on a current challenge facing the company.

## What You'll Gain

- **1-on-1 mentor support:** You'll be matched with a mentor who will help you tackle the curriculum, provide regular feedback, and answer your questions. Your mentor will keep you accountable and give you an insider's perspective.
- **Career coaching:** You'll work through career-specific units with a career coach guiding you — from defining your strategy, and developing your resume and LinkedIn profile to networking, mock interviews, and salary negotiation.
- **A certificate of completion and our Job Guarantee:** You'll graduate with a certificate from Springboard backed by our Job Guarantee — if you don't land a job after graduating, we'll give you a full refund. [Terms apply.](#)

## Key Program Details



**6 months**

Program length



**15-25**

Hours per week



**62 total projects**

Includes 3 portfolio projects (1 capstone project, 1 design sprint, and 1 industry design project)



**Prerequisites**

At least one year of documented professional experience or a degree in areas such as user research, HCI, human factors, graphic/industrial design, architecture, studio arts, UI design



**Tools & skills learned**



Sketch



inVISION



Adobe XD

# Syllabus

## Core Units

### 1. Introduction to UX Design

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This foundational unit explores design fundamentals and the critical elements of the UX Design process. You'll learn about the various UX design roles available in the field and explore the sub-disciplines within each role.

**Topics Covered:**

- What is user experience?
- The difference between UI and UX
- Understanding and choosing UX design roles

### 2. Design Thinking

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Before diving into User Centered Design (UCD) — the process at the heart of the curriculum — you'll examine the philosophy from which UCD and many innovation frameworks have emerged: design thinking. Grounded in empathy, design thinking is a hands-on, iterative approach to problem solving that you will use to create effective user experiences.

**Topics Covered:**

- Design thinking as a mindset
- Five key stages of design thinking:
  - > Empathize
  - > Define
  - > Ideate
  - > Prototype
  - > Test
- Divergent and convergent thinking
- Brainstorming and gamestorming
- Observational empathy



# Core Units

## 3. Understanding the Problem

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At its core, design is about solving problems. A problem could be an app that users find clunky to use or a website that doesn't engage people who visit it. In order to understand your problem, you'll need to collect data and conduct research. In the discovery phase, you'll collect data using several different techniques to:

- Understand the problem space you're working in
- Identify appropriate research methods to use when working on different projects
- Propose possible hypotheses about the problem space

### Topics Covered:

- Generative research
- Secondary research
- Competitive research
- Competitive usability testing
- Usability heuristics
- Quantitative research
- Qualitative research

## 4. Understanding Your User

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User research is central to UX design. When you engage users and understand their feedback, you can move from being aware of a problem to understanding why the problem exists and what users want to see resolved. While there are many different user research tools, this unit will explore the most effective of them. You'll also work on several mini-projects to sharpen your user research skills and then apply your skills to your capstone project.

### Topics Covered:

- User research methods
- Research plans
- Recruiting users through screener surveys
- Creating a research plan and screener for your capstone
- Implementing diary studies
- How to conduct interviews

# Core Units

## 5. Synthesizing Your Research

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Understanding the data you collect during your research phase will help you make decisions that reflect the interests of your users. Learn the different methods you can use to synthesize research to keep your designs focused on the user.

**Topics Covered:**

- Synthesis best practices
- Creating affinity maps
- Creating empathy maps
- Creating user personas
- Writing problem statements
- Creating journey maps
- Presenting your research

## 6. Introduction to Design Tools

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Get acquainted with the most common design tools at your disposal: Figma, Sketch, and Adobe XD. You'll choose one of the three to use for the rest of the program (note that Sketch is only compatible with Mac users.) The unit will close with a mini-project on recreating high-quality UI screens.

**Topics Covered:**

- Exploring the landscape of design tools
- Fundamentals of Figma, Sketch, and Adobe XD

## 7. Design and Ideate

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This unit is all about getting your design hands dirty. You'll start the design stage and design solutions for the problems you identified in the discovery stage. You'll also brainstorm solutions to the problem you're trying to solve for your capstone and learn how to write and map user stories that capture the intent of your personas.

**Topics Covered:**

- Ideation techniques
- User stories

# Core Units

## 8. Information Architecture

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Information architecture (IA) helps you map out how users will experience your product. This unit lays out the fundamentals that will help you create and express your capstone project's structure and flow.

**Topics Covered:**

- Navigation
- Sitemaps
- User flows
- Card sorting

## 9. Sketching and Guerilla Usability Testing

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In this unit, you'll bring your designs to life through sketching. Sketching is an easy, affordable way to get your ideas out of your head and onto paper. You'll then learn to conduct a guerilla usability test to validate your sketches.

**Topics Covered:**

- Sketching screens
- Red routes
- Paper prototypes
- Guerilla usability testing

## 10. Wireframing and Interaction Design

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Once you've created sketches of your product, the next step is to create wireframes. Wireframes are often digitized versions of your sketches — they sit between sketching and high-fidelity mockups. Creating a low-fidelity digital version of your product will enable you to identify critical design decisions while still offering enough flexibility for innovation.

**Topics Covered:**

- Interaction design
- Wireframing
- Wireflows

# Core Units

## 11. User Interface Design

Not all UX designers do UI, but understanding UI is important as it impacts a user's experience. This unit will help you understand how to make your designs more accessible and engaging through the key visual principles of User Interface (UI) Design. Cultivating an understanding of how UI design works will enable you to find a balance between aesthetics and function.

### Topics Covered:

- Mood boards and tone
- Visual hierarchy
- Typography
- Color and color theory
- Layouts
- Creating a style guide for your capstone
- Gestalt principles
- Iconography
- iOS and material design
- Important topics in UI design



# Core Units

## 12. Psychology Principles and Special Topics

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This unit explores topics like psychology and empty states that will take your designs from good to great, by teaching you how to craft designs that lead to increased engagement, continued use, and conversion.

**Topics Covered:**

- Onboarding flows
- Empty states
- Strategy and service design
- The future of UX

## 13. Prototype and Test

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In the final phase of the UCD process, you'll create a prototype of your capstone project's red routes. In this unit, you'll also learn when, why, and how to use different evaluative testing methods to improve your capstone project.

**Topics Covered:**

- Prototypes
- Moderated usability testing
- Remote usability testing
- Conducting usability tests
- Synthesizing and redesigning
- Other evaluative usability research methods

## 14. Communication Skills

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Learning how to tell a compelling story about your designs can go a long way to ensure alignment across business functions. This unit teaches you how to effectively communicate your ideas to a variety of stakeholders, such as team members and clients.

You'll also put together a comprehensive case study of your capstone journey and give a presentation about your capstone project.

**Topics Covered:**

- Collaborating with different teams
- Effective presentations
- Write your capstone case study



# Portfolio Projects

While working through this bootcamp, you will complete **three projects** (design sprint, a capstone, and the Industry Design Project ) that you can showcase in your design portfolio. You'll gain hands-on experience with each stage of the design process, from identifying a problem and building high-fidelity mockups, to testing your prototype and communicating your findings.

# Portfolio Projects

## Design Sprint



### Sprint Days

- Day 1: Mapping
- Day 2: Sketching
- Day 3: Deciding
- Day 4: Prototyping
- Day 5: Testing

You'll use the design sprint process to sharpen your design skills. You'll work through a Google Ventures-style design sprint focused on mastering agile methodology and rapid iteration under tight deadlines. When your sprint is finished, you'll submit a case study.

## Capstone Project

The capstone project is a crucial part of the curriculum that will allow you to integrate and synthesize all of the skills that you've developed while working through the course. The project steps correlate to the User-Centered Design Process. You'll work on different steps of the capstone throughout the program.

### The capstone includes:

- A research plan
- A screener survey and interviews
- Affinity and empathy maps
- Personas
- Problem statements
- A sitemap
- User flows
- Sketches of the red routes
- Wireframes of the red routes
- A prototype of the red routes
- Usability tests
- A case study
- A presentation

## Industry Design Project

The Industry Design Project is a four-week remote externship with a real company. The work you create during this project will be a tangible addition to your portfolio and will help set you apart from others.

### During the project, you'll get:

- Exposure to the industry, either through independent work or with a company
- An opportunity to dive deeper into an aspect of the UX design process
- Experience working in collaboration with design teams and directly with clients

# Building Your Portfolio

Create a job-ready portfolio that incorporates all the projects you will work on as a part of this bootcamp, including your Industry Design Project.

You'll work through the process of assembling a cohesive, in-depth, and engaging collection of work while tailoring your portfolio to show off your unique skills and interests.

## You'll learn how to:

- Refine your case studies
- Write an engaging bio and create a personal logo
- Build your portfolio site
- Critique and review your portfolio





# Career Support

Career units throughout the bootcamp will help you create a tailored job search strategy based on your background and goals. Learn to craft a resume that stands out from the pack, evaluate companies and roles, ace interviews, and negotiate the best possible salary.

Your career coach will be with you every step of the way, offering feedback and providing personalized tips based on your goals.

## Topics Covered

- Types of industry roles
- Job search strategies
- Building a network and using it to land interviews
- Creating a high-quality resume, linkedin profile, and cover letter
- Preparing for technical and non-technical interviews
- Successful negotiation

# Build the Skills and Confidence to Transform Your Career

Learn through projects. Work 1-on-1 with a mentor and career coach.  
Land a job or your money back.



## Springboard Students Achieve Life-Changing Outcomes

NUMBER OF ENROLLED STUDENTS

# 1,445

Enrolled students in the UX Design Career Track since November 2018. <sup>1</sup>

September 2022

12 MONTH JOB PLACEMENT RATE

# 85.3%

Of job-qualified individuals who reported an offer, received it within 12 months of graduation. <sup>2</sup>

September 2022

AVERAGE SALARY INCREASE

# \$30,842

Average salary increase of UX Design students who provided pre- and post-course salaries. <sup>3</sup>

September 2022

<sup>1</sup> Number of students refers to all students who enrolled in the career track excluding any that were refunded due to cancellation in the first 7 days following course start.

<sup>2</sup> Job-qualified individuals defined as all graduates who maintained Job Guarantee eligibility (terms are from the UX Design Career Track Job Guarantee) throughout their job search ("Job-Qualified Graduates"), or Job Guarantee-eligible students who receive a job regardless of completion status ("Early Offerees").

<sup>3</sup> Data on compensation was not self-reported by 110 students who reported receiving offers.

# Ready for the next step?

Learn more and apply [here](#)



**Questions? We're here to help**

Email us at [hello@springboard.com](mailto:hello@springboard.com)  
or call [+1.415.966.2533](tel:+14159662533)