DM-GY 9963 A MS Pre-Thesis in Digital Media: Research Methods

NYU | TANDON SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

Integrated Design and Media • Technology, Culture & Society Department

Course Information:
Monday • 6:00 - 8:50 pm • Fall 2022
370 Jay Street, Room 312
3 credit hrs

Professor:
Elizabeth Henaff • ehenaff@nyu.edu •Office: 370 Jay St #354

Office hours by appointment via Calendly

Please note that dates and assignments may change depending on the needs of the class as the semester progresses.

Class Schedule can be found here

IDM Thesis Structure and Guidelines (PreThesis and Thesis)

You will complete your Master's Thesis at IDM over the course of two semesters, with three main deliverables

Thesis Deliverables

The Thesis deliverables <u>at the end of the two semesters</u> consist in:

- ★ Thesis Project, developed through:
    1. Developing the Brief
    2. Creating a Prototype
    3. Production process
    4. Professional quality outcome

- ★ Thesis Paper, consisting of the following sections:
    1. Introduction
    2. Background and Rationale
    3. Project Description
    4. Methods
    5. Reflections and Conclusions

- ★ Thesis Defense, in which you present your Project and outline the ideas in your Paper to your Thesis Instructor, Project Advisor, peers, and the public. This is the final evaluation of your Project.

Thesis Timeline

We divide your time in Thesis over four Quarters, with the following associated deliverables:

		Project	Paper
Fall	**Q1**	1. Brief	0. Annotated Bibliography
	Q2	2. Prototype	1. Introduction 2. Background
Winter Break			
Spring	**Q3**	3. Production 4. Outcome	3. Project Description 4. Methods
	Spring Break		
	Q4	Defense	
		Committee Meeting	
		Showcase	5. Reflection

Thesis Roles

Thesis Instructor

These are the instructors for the Fall and Spring classes, as assigned through Albert. They will guide you through the process of developing your deliverables, provide critique, and grade your work.

Project Advisor

This is another faculty from IDM whose expertise is aligned with your thesis topic. They will advise you on the broad conceptual development of your project, provide feedback on your work as well as your paper, and attend your defense.

Accountability Partner

Each student will have another IDM thesis student as their accountability partner in this process. Their job is to check in on you, make sure you're aware of deadlines and meeting them, and give you feedback on your process. Maybe eat late night pizza together while you're working on your projects!

Optional: any number of other support roles and allies

You are welcome to ask for help from any number of other people: members of the industry, professors of past classes, other faculty at NYU or other universities. Their role and the extent of their involvement is up to you to decide together. If you would like them to provide formal feedback on your work and attend your defense, discuss this with your Thesis Instructor.

IDM PreThesis Course Description

Learning Objectives

This is the first of a two-semester sequence, ending in a thesis project of depth and rigor through a process of conceptual exploration, research and execution. The goal for this semester (Pre-Thesis) is to create a rich body of research that explores an idea, a theme, or a project in detail, accompanied by a series of experiments and culminating in a series of proof of concept prototypes. The Pre-Thesis research model is intended to be conceptual, creative, and a place to find the right questions to ask about your topic.
The course will allow students to formulate a thesis question and define a project brief, develop conceptual and theoretical research for their topic, establish research methodologies with relevant methods, develop expertise on the topic, and crystallize research into practice through a series of prototypes. During the semester students will produce a significant body of work born out of a research and making model. A Design and Media thesis is unique in that it is more than a paper and more than a project: it is the combination of the two and is created by synthesizing research in order to understand what to make, i.e, you will be engaged in doing practice-based research.

Deliverables

Project Brief

You will spend the first 6 weeks (week 1 - week 6) of the semester defining your project brief. This is a two-page document that covers the Why, Where, Who, What and How about your project

Where and Who:
Conceptually speaking, where is this project situated? What existing contexts are you responding to? What existing sociopolitical concerns, domains of research, creative practices does it relate to? Who are the stakeholders? What is the background in the field? How do you contextualize it with respect to the prior work in this field?

What: What are you making? Is it an object, a book, a movie, a product?

How: How are you executing your project? What are the methods and methodologies you are using? What are the resources you will need, and what is your timeline?

Why:
Why did you decide to do this project? Why is it important to you and/or others? How will you determine that it was successful? What are the metrics you will use?

You will refine this brief to end up with a clearly defined project description in scope, methods, and purpose. You will have to pitch your project idea 3 times.

Project Prototype/Pilot

You will spend the next 6 weeks of the semester (week 7 - week 13) developing your project. You will make prototypes, sketches, make things, write things.

The goal is to have an iterated project prototype at the end of the 6 week making sprint. You will be presenting your work in progress every week to your instructor and your peers.

Thesis paper

You will write a 10-15 page paper that covers the first two sections of your Thesis Paper. These sections are:

1. Introduction
2. Background and Rationale

Assignments

Guidelines and rubrics for individual assignments can be found in the Assignment Guidelines document.

Format

- Assignments are due BEFORE CLASS, to be added to your section's Google Drive folder in Google Doc or Google Sheets format
- Name your file in the following format:

2022-Month-Day_NAME_Week[X]

Late assignments

- Late assignments will be penalized 1 credit point every day that they are late. For example, 5 days late will take your overall, final grade down by 5 points, or half a letter grade
- You may request one, one-week extension on any assignment which will not incur above penalty until 7 days after it was due

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory

- For the online section this means attending the scheduled Zoom meetings, on time, for the entire duration, and being engaged with camera on except for breaks.

- For the in person sections this means being present in class on time, for the entire duration of the class

Tardiness

Being late to class is disruptive to the class and to your peers. Do not be late for class. You must be in the classroom and settled in by the start time of class, and for the return time after breaks. You will be penalized 1 point off of your final grade for every 5 minutes late. For example, if you are 5 min late to 10 classes, this will bring your grade from a B to a C. If you are 25min late to one class, this will bring your grade from a B to a B-. Tardiness more than 30 min may constitute an absence.

Absences

Being absent does not imply an extension on a homework deadline: any homework remains due at that time. Please consult the Assignments section of this document for details. You must schedule office hours with your instructor before the next class to catch up on what you missed.

Excused absences

Things come up! Absences can be excused by contacting the Student Advocate at eng.studentadvocate@nyu.edu. They will help you through the appropriate steps for getting an absence excused. If you have a situation that will cause you to have more than three excused absences, please consult with your instructor to discuss accommodations.

Unexcused absences

Students may miss one class in the semester with no questions asked, and no impact on their grade. Out of courtesy, please notify your instructor of your absence before class.

Any additional, unexcused absences will incur a 5 point penalty (½ a letter grade) on the student's final grade. For example, one absence will bring a B to a B-. Two absences will bring a B to a C.

More than three unexcused absences will incur a failing grade (F).

Requests for hybrid attendance

In-person classes, by default, will not offer a hybrid option. If you wish to request to attend a class in hybrid mode, contact your instructor and these requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Grading

- Each assignment will be graded according to a rubric, which will be posted along with the assignment
- You may request one re-grade for an assignment if it does not meet the grade you need. You must submit the assignment for re-grade one week after it was due

You will be evaluated on your class participation through presentations, on your project, and on your paper. Grades are broken down in the following manner. Guidelines and rubrics for individual assignments can be found in the Assignment Guidelines document.

presentations	5 presentations in the semester	25
project	brief draft	5
	final brief	15
	prototype	20
paper	reading list	5
	annotated bibliography	5
	intro draft 1	5
	background draft 1	5

		intro and background final draft	15	
		total	**100**	

Meetings

With your Thesis Instructor

Twice in the semester, you will meet with your Thesis Instructor one on one, whether during class time or another time arranged mutually.

Come prepared to present your work in progress, including:

- an updated slide deck
- a list of specific questions

With your Project Advisor

Twice in the semester, you will meet with your Project Advisor one on one, at a time that you will arrange with them.

It is your responsibility to reach out to them to schedule these meetings.

Come prepared to present your work in progress, including:

- an updated slide deck
- a list of specific questions

NYU Policies

Academic Honesty

Please review NYU's School of Engineering's academic dishonesty policy in its entirety.

All work for this class must be your own and specific to this semester. Any work recycled from other classes or from another, non-original source will be rejected with serious implications for the student. Plagiarism, knowingly representing the words, media, or ideas of another as one's own work in any academic exercise, is absolutely unacceptable. Any student who commits plagiarism must re-do the assignment for a grade no higher than a D. In fact, a D is the highest possible course grade for any student who commits plagiarism. Please use the MLA or Chicago Manual of Style for citing and documenting source material.

You MUST have complete rights of use to any and all materials which appear in your thesis project. This includes images, illustrations, video, audio etc. **The source of any materials NOT created by you MUST be documented.** Please remember that you can collaborate with other students to create your own media or contact the authors of your media content for rights. I strongly encourage you to use original media for your thesis project, however should you absolutely require to use stock images, video, etc., you will need to provide a PDF of all source files and the usage rights you have purchased/negotiated or whether it is creative commons or copyright free.

NYU Health and Wellness

NYU offers many health and wellness services and resources. Take advantage of them. https://www.nyu.edu/students/health-and-wellness.html

Academic Accommodations

If you are a student with a disability who is requesting accommodations, please contact New York University's Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu. You must be registered with CSD to receive accommodations. Information about the Moses Center can be found at http://www.nyu.edu/csd. The Moses Center is located at 726 Broadway on the 2nd floor.

NYU Tandon's Equity & Inclusion Statement

NYU Tandon values an inclusive and equitable environment for all our students. I hope to foster a sense of community in this class and consider it a place where individuals of all backgrounds, beliefs, ethnicities, national origins, gender identities, sexual orientations, religious and political affiliations, and abilities will be treated with respect. It is my intent that all students' learning

needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. If this standard is not being upheld, please feel free to speak with me.

Title IX

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources here https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/equal-opportunity/title9.html