

Course C08

Where usability meets desirability, Visual design with personas and goals

1 unit

Instructors:

Kim Goodwin, VP Design & General Manager, Cooper

Nate Fortin, Director of Visual Design & Branding, Cooper

Benefits:

Visual design contributes to usability by clarifying hierarchy and relationships, making type more readable, and making screens less cluttered. It enhances desirability by appealing to our aesthetic sense and emotions. In spite of its importance, though, few practitioners have the tools to integrate visual design with interaction design processes or to help stakeholders evaluate visual design based on objective criteria. This course focuses on how field research, personas, and requirements provide effective means for doing so.

After this course, attendees should understand how to:

- Differentiate between interaction design and visual interface design skills
- Use research and personas to guide the emotional and aesthetic aspects of a design
- Develop and get consensus on visual design requirements
- Use requirements to develop and present visual design style studies

Origins:

Adapted from Cooper's two-day Cooper U course on visual interface design.

Features:

This course focuses on the relationship between visual design and interaction design process and roles, and on a process for creating visual design that supports persona and business goals.

Specific topics include:

- Key differences between interaction and visual design, how they complement one another, and why it's ideal to have team members dedicated to one or the other.
- How contextual research can be extended to extract the data visual designers need.
- How minor adjustments to interaction design personas can help designers guide, assess, and communicate about visual design and brand choices.
- How using research and personas to develop a set of visual design requirements can give designers and stakeholders more objective assessment criteria and help them build consensus.
- How visual design requirements help designers develop visual style studies and guide stakeholders in selecting an appropriate direction.
- How iteration, continual reduction, and collaboration among disciplines can form a coherent visual system.

Intended Audience:

Usability and design practitioners who want a rigorous way to approach visual design decisions. Some familiarity with field research, personas, and using scenarios to guide interaction design is helpful, but not required.

Presentation Style:

The course combines lecture, discussion, and exercise.

Instructors' Background:

Kim Goodwin, VP Design & General Manager, Cooper

Kim has been a major contributor to the development of Cooper's Goal-Directed Design methods, and is primarily responsible for the curriculum of its respected Cooper U courses. Kim has been a popular instructor at full-day CHI tutorials, UIE's national conferences, and numerous other events.

Nate Fortin, Director of Visual Design & Branding, Cooper

As head of Cooper's visual design discipline for the past five years, Nate has played a critical role in developing an approach to visual design that is as rigorous as Cooper's interaction design methods. Nate was closely involved in the development of Cooper's two-day visual interface design course, and has been a popular Cooper U instructor.