CS-639 — Interaction Design Studio

A2 Kickoff | Getting Started

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Today

— **A2 overview** (5 min) — requirements recap, high-stakes domain constraint

— **Domain selection check** (5 min) — share your domain with a neighbor

— **Persona + context scenarios** (15 min) — create your persona, map context situations

— **Initial sketches** (15 min) — how does the interface adapt across contexts?

— **Check-in** (5 min) — what is working, what is unclear

Everything you produce today becomes part of your A2 submission. This is not a separate activity — it is A2.

A2 Recap

Assignment 2: Intelligent System Design | Due Monday, April 20 | 25% of final grade

— Design an intelligent system in a **high-stakes domain** — where a wrong action has real consequences

— **Persona** with context scenarios across 3+ situations

— **All four material properties:** agency (Parasuraman et al., 2000), proactivity (Horvitz, 1999), collaboration (Johnson et al., 2014), context-awareness (Dey, 2001)

— **Interaction flows** with P1-P12 annotations

— **Process documentation** and **reflection**

High-stakes does not mean medical or military. Travel, budgeting, education, cooking for allergies — any domain where getting it wrong matters.

Domain Selection Check (5 min)

Turn to a neighbor and share your domain. Your neighbor evaluates:

1. **Are the stakes clear?** — What goes wrong if the system makes a mistake? Is the consequence concrete and specific?
2. **Is the domain rich enough?** — Does it involve at least 3 of Schmidt et al.'s (1998) six context dimensions?
3. **Can you name a user?** — Not "users in general" — a specific person with specific needs and context

If your neighbor cannot articulate what goes wrong, the stakes are not clear enough.

The best domains are ones where you can finish the sentence: "If the system gets this wrong, the user will..."

Persona (5 min)

Be specific — not "users in general":

— Name, age, occupation, relevant background
— Why do they need this system?
— What makes their situation high-stakes?

If you can't name what goes wrong for this person, your stakes aren't specific enough.

Context Scenarios (10 min)

Map **3 situations** using Schmidt et al.'s (1998) six dimensions. Use the handout table.

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Physical			
User state			
Social			
Task			
Temporal			
Device			

If your system behaves the same across all three scenarios, they aren't different enough.

Initial Sketches (15 min)

Sketch how your interface adapts across your 3 context scenarios.

For each scenario, show:

1. **What does the system display?** — What information is relevant in this context?
2. **What SA level is the system operating at?** — Label each element as SA-1 (perception), SA-2 (comprehension), or SA-3 (projection) using Jiang et al.'s (2023) framework
3. **What agency level is appropriate?** — Where does the system inform, suggest, or act?
4. **What context triggers the adaptation?** — Which dimension changed to cause this behavior?

Sketch on paper or in Figma — speed matters more than polish. You are exploring, not delivering.

Example: Travel Safety App

Persona: Maya, 28, solo traveler, first trip to Southeast Asia. High stakes: unfamiliar environment, language barriers, safety decisions.

Scenario 1 — Walking in a new city, daytime:
SA-1: Show neighborhood safety data
SA-2: "This area has fewer tourists after dark"

Scenario 2 — Lost at night, phone battery low:
SA-2: "You are 15 min from your hotel"
SA-3: Auto-share location with emergency contact

Scenario 3 — At a market, negotiating a purchase:
SA-1: Show average local prices
SA-2: "This is 3x the typical price"

Notice how the SA level increases as the stakes increase. The system acts autonomously only when the risk is highest.

Check-In

Before you leave, note for yourself:

— Is your domain truly high-stakes? Can you name what goes wrong?
— Does your persona have enough specificity to drive design decisions?
— Do your 3 scenarios differ across multiple context dimensions?
— Are your SA-level labels honest — or are you designing SA-3 features without acknowledging the risk?

Friday critique: Bring your **persona and initial sketches** for peer feedback. Pods will evaluate whether your stakes are clear, your context dimensions are identified, and your persona is realistic.

You have one week of class sessions before A2 is due. Use them.

Before Friday

— **Bring** your persona and initial sketches (paper or digital) — you will present them in your pod

— **Fill in** all six context dimensions for at least 3 scenarios

— **Label** SA levels on your sketches — know what your system perceives, comprehends, and projects

— **Think about** contextual integrity: what context data does your system collect, and who should NOT have access to it?

Friday is peer feedback on early A2 work. The more concrete your materials, the more useful the feedback.