MASTER OF SCIENCE INFORMATION DESIGN & STRATEGY (MS_IDS)

MS_IDS 401-DL Models and Theories of User-Centered Design (1 Unit)
The User-Centered Design course gives students hands-on experience with the latest design frameworks and methodologies that focus on the end user. Students will learn how a user focused design process can be used to solve the most challenging problems facing businesses and organizations today. Students will be introduced to the latest trends in design thinking, the importance of iterative design frameworks, researching user needs, prototyping, collaboration and critical feedback.

MS_IDS 403-DL Effective Communication (1 Unit)
We have work to do, both individually and collaboratively, to shift into more effective communication collectively. As technology expands, our ways of working have evolved in and through a pandemic. How we communicate matters more and more at work, in relationships, in the media, and through internal dialogue. This course is designed to examine how and why we communicate the way we do. The first half is an examination of our identities and how it impacts the information we give, receive, and perceive. The second half explores how we connect, present, share, and communicate across platforms, venues, cultures, and methods, including brand storytelling, group dynamics, political messaging, and micro-narratives.

MS_IDS 405-DL User Research (1 Unit)
The User Research course provides students with an overview of user research methodologies and approaches used in product/service design and usability testing. Students will have opportunities to apply appropriate research methods to solve a design problem, experience first-hand how to conduct user research, gain insights and prepare the findings for presentation to senior leaders and stakeholders.

MS_IDS 407-DL Information and Content Strategy (1 Unit)
This course will explore how to plan and consistently execute content that supports an organization's goals. Students will learn how to develop a content strategy, conduct a qualitative content audit, develop controlled vocabularies and lexicons, and choose the right medium (text, image, video, social interaction) for their message.

MS_IDS 409-DL Data Science, Management, and Business Strategy (1 Unit)
In this course, students will explore the foundational pillars for the Information Design and Strategy program. The course will coalesce techniques for using data to inform design & strategy within the business or professional setting. Through hands-on assignments and activities, students will gain best practices and walkway with a toolbox of knowledge to succeed in the real world.

MS_IDS 411-DL Information Design and Architecture (1 Unit)
Information architecture is essentially the application of classification and patterns to aid information retrieval. In the digital realm, the information architect is responsible for the overall organization, manipulation, and structure of the data assets for a website, app, or digital product/service ecosystem. We have grown accustomed to web and mobile apps providing "information," which is a value-added proposition. In the course, we will work first with raw data. One of the most essential things an information architect does is to choose what is grouped together and how it is arranged... each time we do this, we change the meaning. Data needs a careful hand to make it into something meaningful or valuable to an end user.

MS_IDS 413-DL Visual Communication (1 Unit)
Contemporary society is inundated with visual messages. Aside from the pervasive images and icons used in advertising, visual information permeates every aspect of our lives (from politics, fashion, and architecture, to data, computers, and the domestic objects that require our daily use). While visual information in society has become more prominent in the digital age, many of the methods for communicating visually remain the same. Visual communication uses a set of universal principles to effectively communicate through the design and layout of images and data. This class will focus on the ways that we perceive visual messages, how we interpret them, how to create them for a variety of purposes, and how we can problem-solve visually.

MS_IDS 422-DL Introduction to Learning Theory (1 Unit)
Effective instructional design begins with an understanding of the learning process. In this course, students will learn behaviorist, cognitive, constructivist, and social learning theories and their relationship to instructional practices and course design. Factors influencing learning, such as learning styles, motivation, and engagement, are also explored.

MS_IDS 423-DL Instructional Design (1 Unit)
Students learn the foundational principles and elements of instructional systems, from analysis through evaluation. They will explore commonly-used instructional design models and learn how to apply them in an education or training environment. Students will practice incorporating sound instructional strategies into the design and development of prototypes in real-world instructional settings.

MS_IDS 425-DL Learning Environment Design (1 Unit)
This course is an introduction to learning environment design for educational media and systems. The course will examine overarching ideas that are fundamental to learning environments and current research that informs the design and study of those environments. Students will examine technologies that can affect the behavioral, cognitive, and social dimensions of learning. Guided by research, online discussions, testing models, and technology solutions, students will learn the process of designing learning environments in a variety of settings.

MS_IDS 426-DL Educational Technology (1 Unit)
This course is an overview of the field of educational technology: highlighting current issues and the use of technology to meet goals in educational settings, workplace needs, and/or professional development goals. Students will identify and synthesize research of an educational technology tool; students will showcase current and emerging educational technologies.

MS_IDS 432-DL Storytelling and Technical Writing (1 Unit)
Students will experiment with a variety of writing techniques in order to communicate consistent messaging within a variety of mediums. Students will also explore hybrid writing and storytelling texts, as well as engage in discussions of weekly reading topics. Students will then produce experimental and informational design writing projects that give students insight into storytelling, as well as specific technical writing methods, for creating engaging content in organizations.

MS_IDS 433-DL Social Media and Content Curation (1 Unit)
You need to know how to build compelling content to reach, engage, and build relationships with a high-value audience. This course is designed to give you the knowledge, skills, and experience to build a 52-week multimedia content strategy for any market. During the program, you will work as a team with a real client desiring to develop or improve their content. You will use industry, social, and market analytics tools and proven content strategies to build a program tailored to your business
Digital interfaces can be found just about everywhere in our world today, and they play crucial roles across business, government, industry, and beyond. Interface Designers apply visual design, information design, information architecture, human psychology, and artistic flair to create digital interfaces that are safe, enjoyable and, most of all, effective. By understanding the places interfaces are used and the people who use them, designers make pivotal choices that impact the effectiveness of systems. This course explores tools and techniques for the design and evaluation of digital interfaces across industries. Students are exposed to a variety of design tools, though the course focuses more on theory and strategy than software-mastery. (Required: MS_IDS 401-DL and MS_IDS 405-DL.)

MS_IDS 466-DL Design Systems and Operations (1 Unit)

Design-thinking isn’t just effective for creating delightful products and services. Design teams themselves can be optimized for performance, quality, and scalability through the application of design systems and operations frameworks. The course explores case studies of how innovative organizations and design teams across industries have successfully scaled their operations while maintaining creativity, innovation, and output. Various design systems are explored and evaluated as students gain the strategic mindset necessary to lead design teams to success in a wide range of fluid and complex organizational settings. (Required: MS_IDS 401-DL and MS_IDS 405-DL.)

MS_IDS 481-DL Leadership and Business Strategy (1 Unit)

This leadership class is focused on the unique work of IDS professionals and will examine leadership styles, using effective teamwork and organizational strategies, and how to lead organizational change. It will cover topics regarding leadership essentials, agility, and effectiveness to increase the leadership skills of all participants.

MS_IDS 498-DL Capstone Project (1 Unit)

The capstone project course is the culmination of the IDS program and demonstrates to faculty a student’s mastery of the curriculum and core competencies in the information design and strategy field. Working individually, students complete a comprehensive project chosen in conjunction with their instructors. Students are individually assessed and graded throughout the duration of class. Students should retain all course material from previous classes in the program, including textbooks, to successfully complete assignments. Students should have completed 10 of 12 courses in the program, with all core courses completed.

MS_IDS 499-DL Independent Study (1 Unit)

An independent study is a customized course of study undertaken by a single student under the guidance of an instructor. Independent studies are comparable in their demands to other graduate-level courses. Please see the SPS Graduate Student Handbook and your academic advisor for more information about independent study registration.

MS_IDS 590-DL Thesis Research (1 Unit)

This final project is meant to represent the culmination of students’ experience in the program and must demonstrate mastery of the curriculum and ability to conduct sustained independent research and analysis. The project may be applied or may be a traditional scholarly paper; in both cases a write-up following the paper’s program-specific guidelines is required. Students must submit a proposal and secure a first reader in order to register; for further details students are advised to review the student handbook and contact their academic adviser.