

dashboard interface design

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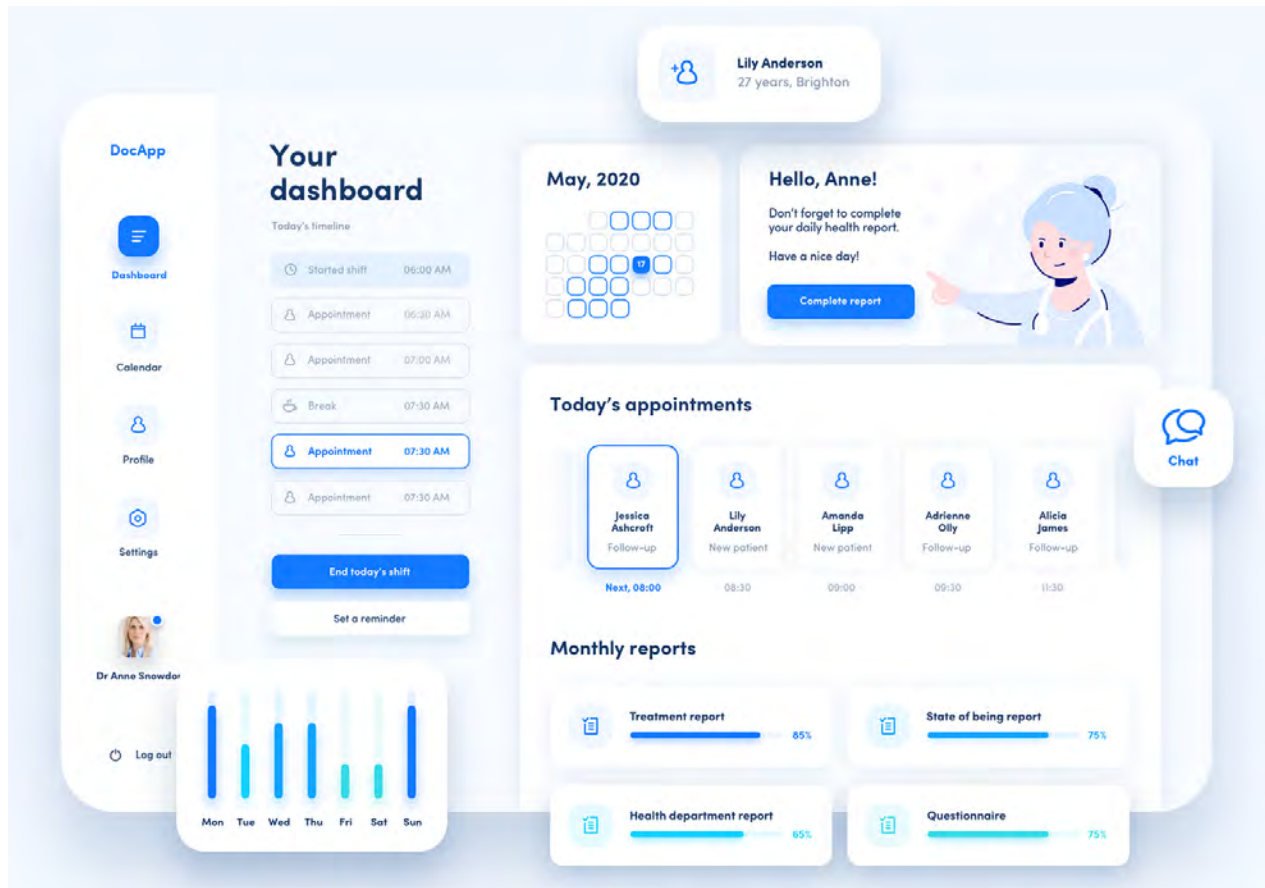
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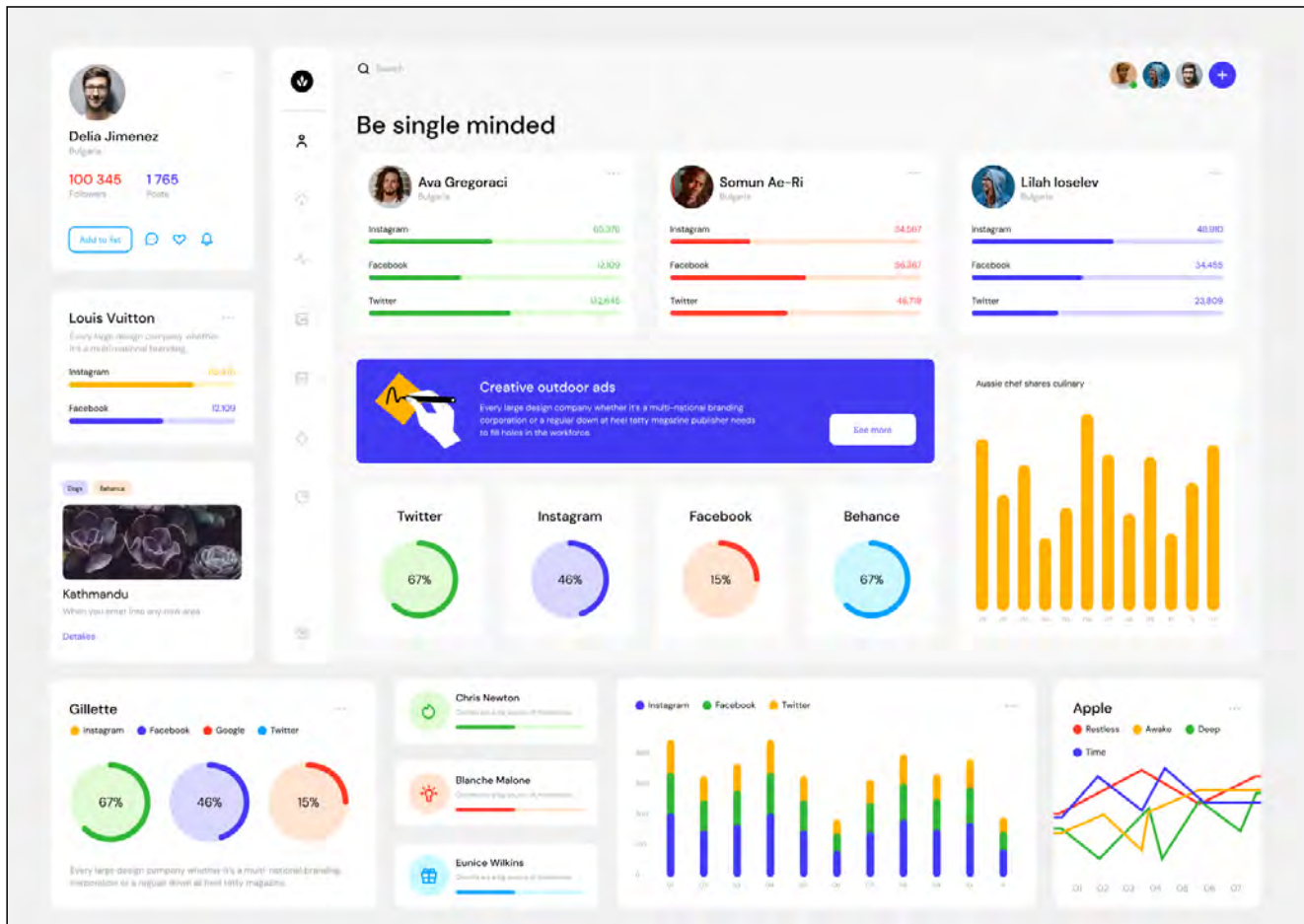
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introduction

This project and images for steps are pulled almost entirely from [this article](#) by Diana Malewicz.



- Dashboards are user interfaces that visualize multiple data sources (or reports) through numbers, graphs, and charts—typically on one screen, but some are scrollable.
- A dashboard can visualize one data set theme, like users, or summarize multiple data points for a high-level business performance snapshot.
- A UI kit is a large compilation of reusable and easy-to-use UI components, templates, styles, resources and other useful digital assets that can be used to create user interface designs and websites. UI kits are also referred to as user interface kits and UI design kits. These elements contain a consistent design system that expresses data in a visually stimulating and clear way.
- Widgets are also important components that make up a Dashboard. They help you visualize and summarize the data stored in your Apps.
- *Hint: Sometimes another way to consider what to show on your Dashboard is if you were imagining an app that you used across multiple devices from your laptop to your smartphone. What elements would you use and how would you use them?*



SEE [THIS LINK](#) FOR INTERACTIVE VERSION OF THIS DASHBOARD >>
CLICK OFF/ON BUTTONS.

objectives

This project is intended to ease students into UI/UX awareness using Adobe software with which students should be comfortable. This means starting to build vector elements in Illustrator. Photoshop will be used only to place raster images when necessary. The project concludes with bringing elements into XD for basic interactivity prototyping.

It also covers the following concepts whose graphic design foundations genesis has evolved to UI/UX interactive non-linear platforms.

- **Design Process** First Steps >> Research. Research more. Brainstorm. Mindmap. Sketch. Repeat.
- **Color, Contrast, and Content** – [The 3 C's of Interface Design](#) – should be considered when designing the interface. **Continuity** is the 4th C, which is easily controlled by creating a Design System that is enforced throughout the entire piece.
- **Typography** is about space as much as shape; plus, screens affect reading in a different way than print because the former is pixels of light while the latter is dots of ink on paper. Though type always has a voice, it is often calm and easy to read (and code) on a screen; therefore, students should be careful with fonts that are overly detailed or difficult to read.
- **New names** for design elements will be introduced/reviewed.
 - Sometimes print or UI/UX terms live in only one world. For example, paper weight means nothing to app development. Where *Pantone* color is precise per ink printed on a substrate, *hexadecimal* color will depend on a user's screen.
 - Two different terms more often mean generally the same thing. For example, *points, inches, centimeters, picas, and pixels* are just different measurement systems. *Visual Guidelines* are almost synonymous with a *Design System*.
 - New words develop – or just become the new “better” way of explaining – that exist already, like naming all of the pieces you will use repeatedly *Assets*.
- **UX:** Always know your audience, even when it's called a **user**. **Human-centered design** removes almost all prior knowledge and instead asks for real-time collective solutions to precise questions. Consider how user experience of prototypes informs the way a piece should develop.
- **UX:** Consider how a user **experiences and interacts with elements in a non-linear fashion** in the world of interactive devices (vs. a book, for example). Sometimes it is important not to stray too far from a “trained” device interaction, but other times, user experience should rewrite the inherited rules. For example, websites in 2005 were still built as one page that linked to

the next page, while today's UI//UX designer instead considers how pop-up information boxes could inform a page element simply with a rollover. **If a designer can dream it and they can communicate with the developer correctly, the code will catch up.**

A few other things to remember throughout the semester:

- Students fresh from GRFX-2303 will be excited or frustrated by the increased freedom and expectations but major decrease in step-by-step guidance. Meanwhile, students in their last semester prefer to answer design objectives with near independence because they are so much more comfortable with software and their own design process. Wherever you find yourself on that spectrum, just remember:
 - **Every skill takes practice.** If it were easy, you wouldn't need 4+ years to get a degree in it. After that, you will continue to learn – and relearn – throughout your career. Never stop learning.
 - Likewise, **the only way to learn software is to use it again and again and again.** There isn't any magic trick. It just takes time.
 - This is the same with coding. **There will be almost zero hand-coding in this course, but you will complete a basic overview of html/css and javascript because it is essential you have awareness.** Awareness does not mean you need to code. It means you understand the possibilities and constraints of the medium so you can imagine what can be done and build proper files for a developer.
 - If a student doesn't understand how to do something, **professional communication** with the professor is required. Fellow students with more experience may also have suggestions.
 - You must understand how to **organize your time** and **prioritize what is important.** Along with being very good with a calendar, it is also suggested you put a timer on your activities if you keep falling behind. This includes a timer on those video games you play each day because it's the only way you can unwind, but also a timer on class work, designing a little every day so it's not all at the last minute. :)

As explained in the syllabus, grade sheets will be returned with rubrics and brief comments. By each rubric point, CR, 1/2 CR, or No CR will be listed. The numerical equivalent would be:

CR = **100%** | 1/2 CR = **50%** | No CR = **0%**

OVERALL:

- **Directions were followed accurately.**
- **Participation** in all class and/or one-on-one discussions.
- Time management. **All work turned in on time or before due date(s).**
- Ambition. The overall evolution of work shows commitment and creative problem-solving.
- No spelling mistakes.

RESEARCH + LO-FI WIREFRAME:

- Low-fidelity wireframe and other sketches show significant critical thinking.
- Ideas presented are creative in relation to research and project goals.
- Wireframe ideas presented display awareness of basic UX objectives.

DESIGN SYSTEM + MED-FI WIREFRAME:

- Minimum of 6 modules of information on dashboard are required.
- Ideas presented display awareness of UI objectives, typography, and layout per platform.
- Design system font choice(s) make sense aesthetically per UI/UX needs.
- Design system color choices make sense aesthetically per UI/UX needs.
- Design system UI elements, including iconography, make sense aesthetically per UI/UX needs.
- Medium-fidelity wireframe displays design system.

ASSETS + STATES+ WIDGETS:

- Vector artwork build is clean. No masked elements.
- Multiple states on at least 3 assets (simple buttons preferred).
- Assets follow design system.
- Widgets make sense per user needs.
- Assets show awareness of the 4 C's of Interface Design:

- Color
- Contrast
- Content
- Consistency

FINAL KIT:

ILLUSTRATOR

- **Directions were followed accurately.**
- Attention to detail.
- All elements display awareness of basic UX objectives.
- All elements display awareness of UI objectives.
- Composition and Layout take into account shape vs. space within the artboard.

XD

- **Directions were followed accurately.**
This includes understanding how one publishes once, then continues to update the link. In other words, only one URL should be needed.
- At least 3 assets (simple buttons preferred) with multiple states are shown.
- At least these 3 assets are made into Components.
- Interaction successful on prototype.

BEHANCE:

- **Directions were followed accurately.**
- [No spelling or grammar mistakes.](#)
- Work displays significant, unrushed efforts of critical thinking and self-reflection.

STEP 1 research + lo-fi wireframe

Each student will select their application's purpose. She/he/they should consider themselves as the ideal user, even though this is rarely the case in a career setting.

Evidence of all of the following may be required on the final Behance page, so **do not lose it**.

Another suggestion is to take a clean, clear picture of work with your phone to easily access it later.

RESEARCH

Professor will place multiple samples of Dashboards in a thread on Slack's #1413_proj-1 channel. These can be UI Kit or SaaS dashboards. The point is to observe modular elements with a consistent design system, plus consideration of helpful elements to a user of that application.

Each student will post examples of their favorites and why in the same thread. Directions provided in class and on Slack.

DUE > WHAT • WHEN • WHERE

DUE for discussion in class **11:00am** on **Thurs Jan 11**.

- Significant evidence of research. This includes required posts and explanations in thread on Slack #2803_proj-1.

With this research, student will proceed to next steps in class on Thurs Jan 11. >>

BASIC IDEA(S) + LO-FIDELITY WIREFRAME

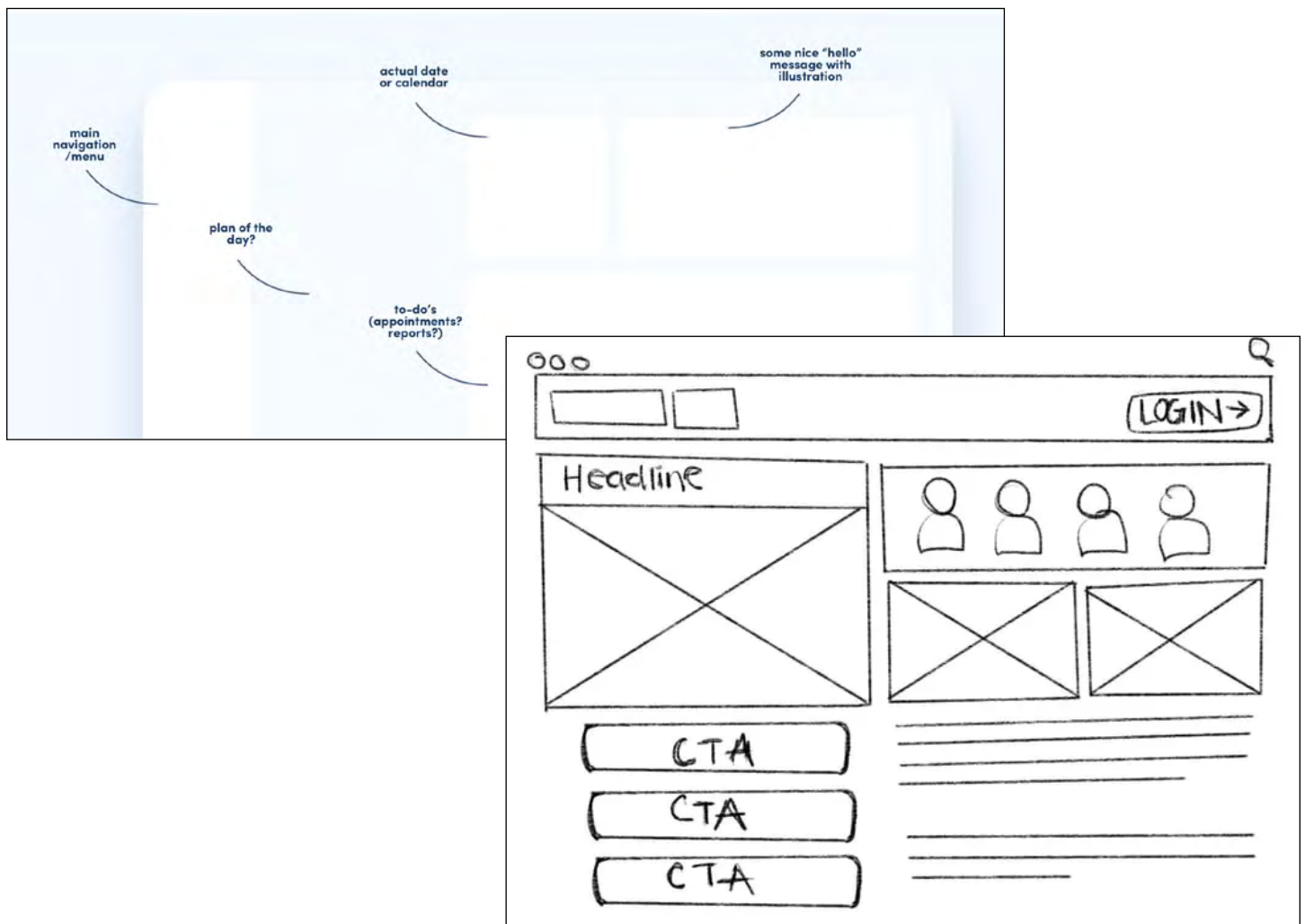
Start with an idea for your dashboard. Consider multiple possibilities and keep honing in on exactly what your app would do and for whom. Get really specific! Have a target!

An example would be for a healthcare industry, preferably doctors, who have daily shifts, different patients and other duties. The designer explained her aunt is a doctor. Besides saving lives, the vast majority of work her aunt does is the overwhelming ton of paperwork. The dashboard shows elements to help organize her aunt's daily life. The UI on the dashboard works well on a computer screen, but can be pulled apart into different user interface elements and widgets that could display easily on their own screen. >> [see dashboard on page 2](#)

Wireframing in UI/UX Design is one of the most crucial steps which involves visualizing the skeleton of digital applications. A wireframe is a layout of a product that demonstrates what interface elements will exist on key pages. It is a critical part of the interaction design process.

While considering, start sketching up a rough wireframe like the two on the next page, one building on the next. This can be done on paper, Procreate/Fresco, or Illustrator.

Include at least 6 modules of information, considering a set of elements like multiple contact emojis as 1 “module.”.



DUE > WHAT • WHEN • WHERE

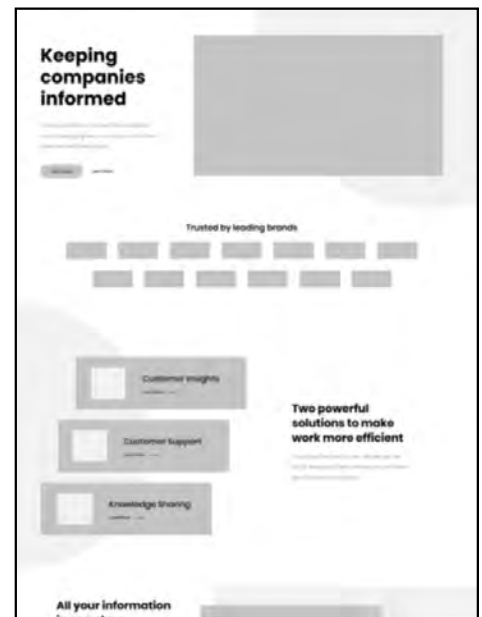
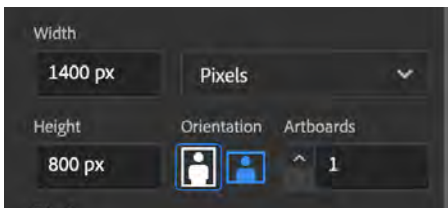
DUE for discussion in class **11:00am** on ~~Tues Jan 16~~ **Thurs Jan 18**.

STEP 2 med-fi wireframe + design system

MEDIUM-FIDELITY WIREFRAME

After discussion with professor, student should proceed to refining their idea. Building out a medium-fidelity (tighter, but not final) wireframe should correspond to the development of the design system. Use Illustrator. The wireframe should respond to the design system created.

Start a new file in Illustrator for Web with these specifications:



Name the file **YOUR LAST NAME_2803-Proj1_Preliminary.ai**.

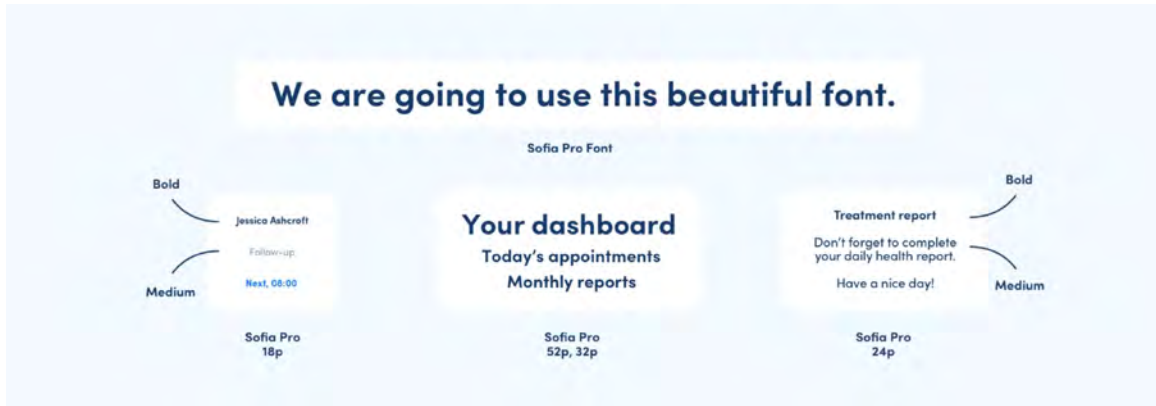
This wireframe is not what you will be stuck with for the final build, though it might be the same. The point is to further figure out what assets and widgets to show on the wireframe in containers that can later be arranged in a more aesthetic manner on the dashboard. Think in modules that can be moved.

DESIGN SYSTEM

Though nothing extremely organized like a proper UI. Kit will be required, student should decide on elements for a solid and consistent visual system and hierarchy to use throughout the dashboard.

These include:

- **Font(s)** to use for headings, subheads, body text, etc. Instead of using many fonts, try to differentiate the same font with such parameters as size, weight and color. [Google Fonts](#) provide a great collection of choices, though not all will work well. *see next page >>*

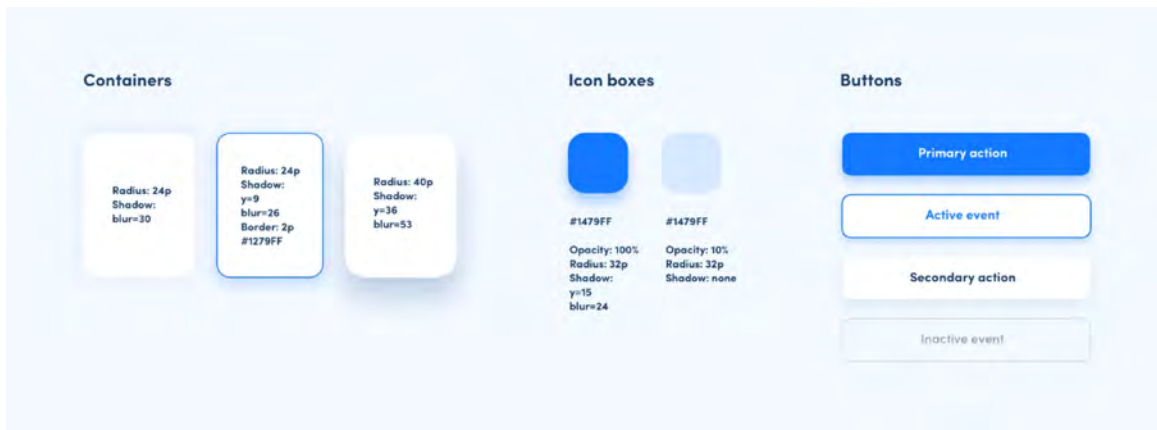


- **Color Palette:** There are many apps online to help you with this. Know the basics of color psychology and choose the color palette that will be suitable for a certain kind of a product/industry.
 - For example, the designer of the healthcare app chose these. Her explanation is: *I choose my main color – for this project, a vivid, bold blue. I lower the opacity and I get my second color – for example, for backgrounds. I’m choosing my dark blue from the same color map (HSL). I also lower the opacity of that color and that’s how I get another, less saturated color which I can use for background. And then I choose my favorite color, the color of empty space and harmony, which in the designer world is white, of course.*

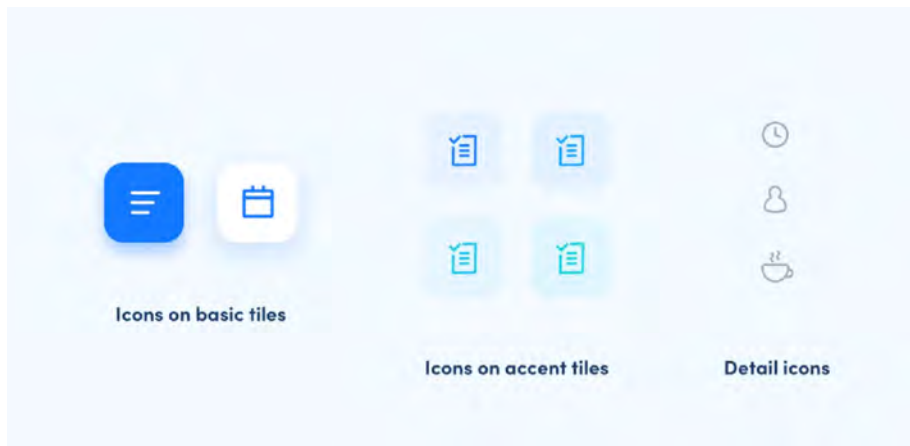


- Also, consider if you want to show all in light and/or dark mode?
(Do both for extra credit!)

- **UI Element Styles:** When we have chosen the fonts and colors, we can create styles for our UI elements – containers, icons and buttons. You can create a functional, attractive interface having only a few styles to work with, that you can mix depending on the element’s role and importance. Also, see Assets + States in next section.





- **Iconography:** When choosing icons, consistency is the key.



DUE > WHAT • WHEN • WHERE

DUE for discussion in class **11:00am** on ~~Tues Jan 23~~ **Thurs Jan 25**.

 **YOUR LAST NAME_2803-Proj1_Preliminary.ai** with all required elements in Google Drive PROJECT 1 sub-folder. Design system should be shown on medium-fidelity wireframe like the example [on this page](#).

 **File: Export** as a **PNG** and post to thread in Slack #2803_proj-1 requesting it.

STEP 3 assets + states

Assets are the building blocks that contribute to the overall aesthetics, functionality, and user experience of a design or digital project. They can include images, icons, illustrations, logos, fonts, videos, audio files, and other media components. See [widgets](#) in the next step, understanding that a widget may be considered an asset.

- For this project, all assets must be built in **Illustrator**.
- **Avoid masking final work.** Instead, use Pathfinder or other tool to have as clean of a build as possible.

Some assets within a UI design exist within different **states**, namely interactive buttons. These component states give users useful indications on how to interact with a product and what their interactions accomplish.

For this project, concentrate on buttons; however, more can be experimented with if desired.

For example, [this interactive dashboard](#) had these 2 states for the button asset.



File : Save your file as **YOUR LAST NAME_2803-Proj1_Assets.ai**. You will build all assets, states, and widgets on this document. Use as many artboards as you wish. Work and think on this, attempting to keep some semblance of order.

DUE > WHAT • WHEN • WHERE

DUE for discussion in class any day before final due date. Check Slack for new requirements.



File: Export as a **PNG** and post to thread in Slack #2803_proj-1 requesting it.

Final work **DUE 11:00am** on ~~Tues Jan 30~~ **Thurs Feb 1**.



YOUR LAST NAME_2803-Proj1_Assets.ai with all required elements in Google Drive PROJECT 1 sub-folder.



File: Export as a **PNG** and post to thread in Slack #2803_proj-1 requesting it.

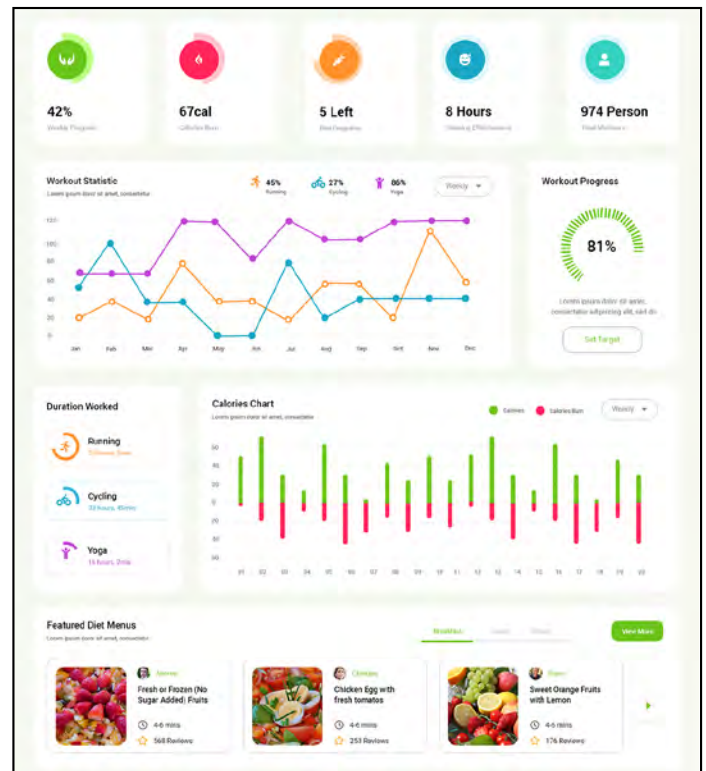
STEP 4 widgets

A **widget** elevates and displays a small amount of timely, relevant information from your app or game so people can see it at a glance in additional contexts. Do not create a page of elements that do not relate to each other. They also do not necessarily need to be the same size, though can be if this helps you conceive of them more easily.

Continue working on artboards in your **YOUR LAST NAME_2803-Proj1_Assets.ai**.

Embed (not Link) any placed raster images.

FYI: Multiple states can be created for these widgets; however, the ability to render them in XD will be limited to vector objects for this project.

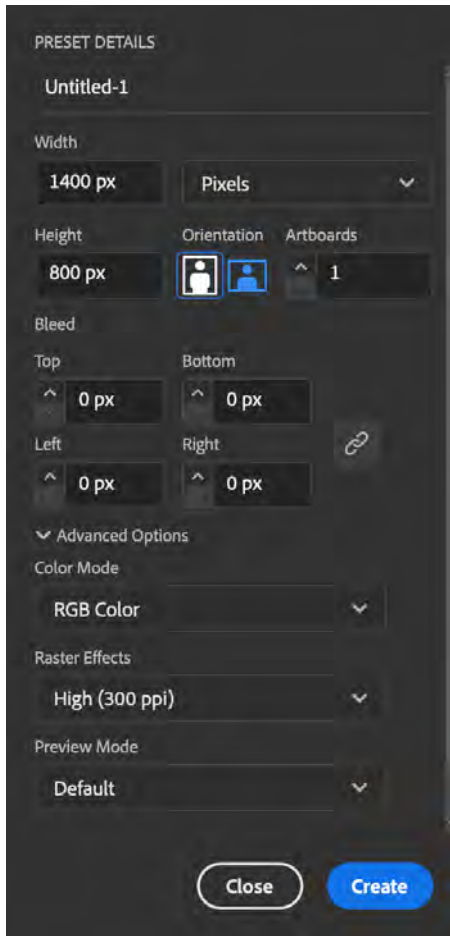


DUE > WHAT • WHEN • WHERE

See due dates for all elements on **YOUR LAST NAME_2803-Proj1_Assets.ai** document on [previous page](#).

STEP 5 dashboard

Start a new file in Illustrator for Web with specifications:



File : Save as **YOUR LAST NAME_2803-Proj1_Dashboard.ai**.

Embed (not Link) if you place any raster images.

Starting from the earlier wireframe content ideas, place all assets – with and without multiple states – and widgets as the modular containers they are on to the dashboard. There is no magic trick here. Try different pairings, change composition, and polish certain alignments until it looks good.


Consider the following:

- Remember to keep the similar margins/spaces between the elements. We won't talk grids/layouts now, but make sure that at least major content has visually proportional spacing.
- Abandon the fear of too much whitespace. It is every interface's best friend. It helps any UI breathe, and it makes it look sleek and tidy.
- Use your primary color only on a few selected elements. In another way, it will be too overwhelming.
- Use different shadowing to create a feeling of depth. Remember that only some of the elements should cast a shadow. Leave the rest flat.
- Elements should have consistent edge roundness in each group. For example: buttons should all have the same roundness. Containers can have bigger corner radius, but the same value for all of them.


- Remember to center labels in the buttons, both horizontally and vertically.
- Keep the same margins inside containers.
- Increase the radius of the rectangle's edges to the point where it looks very smooth. They will look very bubbly and clickable!


DUE > WHAT • WHEN • WHERE

DUE for discussion in class any day before final due date. Check Slack for new requirements.


 **File: Export** as a **PNG** and post to thread in Slack #2803_proj-1 requesting it.


Final work **DUE 11:00am** on ~~Thurs Feb 1~~ **Tues Feb 6**.

 **YOUR LAST NAME_2803-Proj1_Dashboard.ai** with all required elements in Google Drive PROJECT 1 sub-folder.

 **File: Export** as a **PNG** and post to thread in Slack #2803_proj-1 requesting it.

If any updates are made to the Illustrator file after February 1st, do the following by the final due date of the interactive dashboard, which is **DUE 11:00am** ~~Tues Feb 6~~ **Thurs Feb 8**.

 Replace the previous AI file in the Google Drive PROJECT 1 sub-folder

 **File: Export** as a **PNG** . Then post again in the same thread in Slack #2803_proj-1 as the previous post. That means your work will be posted twice.

STEP 6 interactive dashboard

This last step will be completed together in class on Thurs Feb 1 Tues Feb 6.

Create a new document and save it as **YOUR LAST NAME_2803-Proj1_Dashboard2.xd**

We will **File : Import** your AI file into XD, but it is important to know the following:

- You could build almost all of your assets and most widgets in XD, though we did not for this first class project.
- If creating vector files to import into an app prototype program, most – like Figma – require an SVG file. Illustrator easily exports your vector AI file to SVG. However, Adobe XD will take the native AI file type from Illustrator without a problem.
- XD will create its own Artboard when it imports the file.
- If we were to have a proper file build in XD, you would need to **Make Components** for almost everything on your artboard. Instead, we will only Make Components of the assets with multiple states, replacing multiple static images with the one multi-state component.

» For example, see the ON-OFF switches on this dashboard. >>

<https://xd.adobe.com/view/a1a93c78-de8f-442d-8b1a-8a4c4c7a1f99-f4fa/?fullscreen>

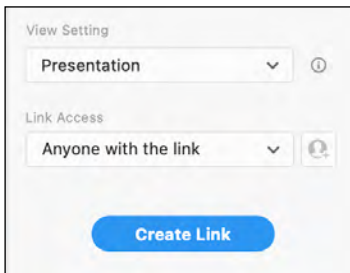
I created the XD file and buttons from artwork created by somebody else.

Things to remember:

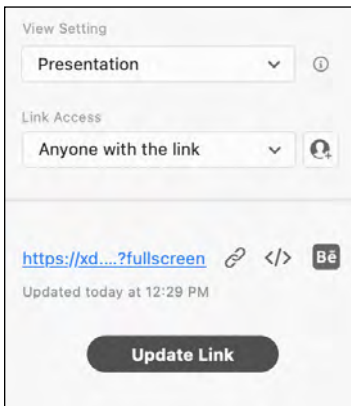
- Build all on the first artboard. That might mean you must move all elements to that first artboard after importing artwork that comes in on its own artboard.
- Remember the difference between Design, Prototype, and Share.
- Your imported assets will import as grouped, even if you didn't group them in Illustrator. **DO NOT UNGROUP**. Instead, double-click until you get to the vector element you need.
- Make a component of its default state. Then Edit the Main Component. XD might force you to edit that component rather than allowing another new image to be placed as the new state.
- You can make a rollover and a toggle state or just a toggle state. Toggle can be named to ON if you prefer.

- Though you will be guided in class, this is a great video to help >
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbhbmZln24I>

When finished and saved, SHARE > share with these constraints:



You will paste the link into Slack when requested. Remember if you make any changes now, you must **File : Save AND Update the Link**.



When completely finished and ready to turn in, **File : Save As a Local Document**.

This XD file should then be uploaded to your Google Drive.

DUE > WHAT • WHEN • WHERE

Final work **DUE 11:00am** on ~~Tues Feb 6~~ **Thurs Feb 8**.

 **YOUR LAST NAME_2803-Proj1_Dashboard2.xd** local document in Google Drive PROJECT 1 sub-folder.

 **URL link from XD** posted to thread in Slack #2803_proj-1 requesting it.

behance

Save all steps of this project, and be ready to write a brief explanation of your design choices and self-evaluation. Your Behance page will be updated with each project.

- » **It is highly suggested you write all of this out in a document that can check your grammar and spelling first** (Word, Pages, Google Docs, etc.). Then copy : paste your text and insert images in one sitting on Behance. This way you also avoid the internet suddenly crashing midway and losing information that wasn't yet cached.
- » When creating the post, remember this should also display comprehension of design. **You must use visual hierarchy** by making sure sections, like **SUMMARY**, are clearly defined via type weight (and/or other techniques) so the information's "chunks" are clearly defined.

Below are specific directions for this project's Behance artist statement page:

- **SUMMARY:** Minimum of one paragraph summarizing the project and its objectives. Do not copy the project sheet. Instead, explain it like you would explain to a friend.
- **GOALS:** What did you want to learn with this project AFTER you read the preliminary (or full) project sheet. Aside from "my goal was to get an A," what did you hope to LEARN for your future use as a designer?
- **PRELIMINARY WORK:** Minimum of one paragraph per each bullet point below, briefly explaining these first steps of your design process. **Remember that you are telling a story to the public, not just the professor who knows what you did and why you did it.**
 - » **SHOW** image(s)/screenshot(s) of research notes that impacted you the most. Briefly **EXPLAIN**.
 - » **SHOW** image(s)/screenshot(s) of your low-fi wireframe and any notes you made while considering your design choices. Show your thinking! Briefly **EXPLAIN**.
- **PURPOSE OF DASHBOARD:** Minimum of one paragraph explaining the point of your dashboard and for whom it is intended.
 - » OPTIONAL > **SHOW** images/screenshot(s) of any notes as you came to this conclusion.
- **DESIGN SYSTEM + MED-FI WIREFRAME:** Minimum of one paragraph per each bullet point below, explaining your design choices per your research and personal experience.
 - » **SHOW** screenshot(s) of fonts chosen for design system. Briefly **EXPLAIN**.

- » **SHOW** screenshot(s) of colors chosen for design system. Briefly **EXPLAIN**.
- » **SHOW** screenshot(s) of UI styles and iconography chosen for design system. Briefly **EXPLAIN**.
- » **SHOW** screenshot(s) of your med-fi wireframe. Briefly **EXPLAIN**.
- **DASHBOARD CONSTRUCTION:** Minimum of one paragraph each bullet point below, explaining your design choices per your research and personal experience. Remember to describe your design choices, as well as how these elements fulfill the need(s) of the user that have been identified. **How will this dashboard make your user's life easier? How will the construction of the elements be easy to use? Explain your progress.** Use screenshots. Tell a story. :)
 - » **SHOW** screenshot(s) of assets created, including why you did this and how they respond to your design system. **EXPLAIN**.
 - » Include at least one example of an asset with multiple states, like a button.
 - » **SHOW** screenshot(s) of widgets created and how they work within the design system. **EXPLAIN**. If you have multiple states of any widgets, explain this.
 - » **EXPLAIN** how you arranged all elements on the final dashboard. **SHOW** screenshot(s) to help you tell your story.
- **KNOWLEDGE GAINED:** Minimum of one paragraph explaining what you learned. Share the technical skills of the software used, design choices, UI and/or UX considerations, but also discuss any changes to your mindset or expectations of graphic design.

Make sure you check your grammar and spelling using Grammarly, or similar. **Improper grammar and misspellings greatly reduce your project grade!**

DUE > WHAT • WHEN • WHERE

*In class on ~~Thurs Jan 25~~ **Tues Jan 30**, paste in the URL to your Behance page on Slack #2803_behance and/or as directed on Canvas. It is preferred this page be a continuation of an already existing Behance page for A-State classes (which can be mixed with personal projects). If you do not have a page created, please speak with Prof. Nikki.*

Project 1 Behance post **DUE by 11:00am** on ~~Thurs Feb 8~~ **Tues Feb 13**.

Make sure your post is **published** on Behance. Then check the URL for your page on Slack channel and/or Canvas. Your new project should be up! :)