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COURSE SYLLABUS

SL 4N



COURSE SYLLABUS — SL 4N: UI/UX DESIGNER

Maven Smart System (MSS) — USAREUR-AF

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY EUROPE AND AFRICA
(USAREUR-AF)
Wiesbaden, Germany

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MAVEN SMART SYSTEM (MSS) — USAREUR-AF

Field	Detail
Level	SL 4N — UI/UX Designer Specialist Track
Duration	5 days (40 hours)
Prerequisite sites	SL 1, SL 2, SL 3 (all Go evaluations on file — REQUIRED , not recommended); familiarity with visual design tools (Figma, Sketch, or equivalent) and user research methods
Audience	UI/UX designers responsible for research, design, and usability validation of MSS applications
Format	Instructor-led lecture + design studio + practical exercise
Location	MSS Training Environment (Workshop access required; design tool licenses required)

BLUF: SL 4N teaches UI/UX designers to practice Soldier Centered Design on MSS — conducting user research in operational environments, building information architectures for data-dense military displays, designing accessible Workshop and Slate application interfaces, and validating designs through usability testing with representative users. SL 4N is for designers who translate user needs into implementable design specifications. If the requirement can be met with default Workshop layouts, SL 3 is sufficient.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

#	Objective
1	Conduct a structured user research session using SCD methodology — contextual inquiry or semi-structured interview — with at least 3 representative users, synthesizing findings into a problem statement
2	Create a user persona based on research data, including role, rank range, operational context, key tasks, and pain points
3	Design an information architecture for an MSS dashboard that passes the "glance, scan, commit" test at 2-second, 10-second, and 30-second levels

#	Objective
4	Produce a Workshop layout specification with widget selection, data binding, filter logic, and responsive behavior documentation
5	Apply MSS visual design standards including classification banners, status color conventions with redundant encoding, and WCAG 2.1 AA contrast ratios
6	Design a complete interaction specification covering default, loading, empty, error, and success states for a data entry workflow
7	Execute a usability test with 5+ representative users, documenting task completion rates, error patterns, and severity-rated findings
8	Produce a design-to-development handoff package that a SL 4L SWE can implement without follow-up clarification
9	Complete an accessibility checklist covering contrast, keyboard navigation, text alternatives, touch targets, and screen reader compatibility

PRE-COURSE CHECKLIST

Complete 10+ duty days before Day 1:

- Request **Workshop design access** from C2DAO — standard MSS Builder access is sufficient for Workshop design; bring your preferred external design tool (Figma recommended)
- Read TM-40N, Chapter 1 (Introduction, SCD methodology overview, the balanced team model) — 20 min
- Read TM-40N, Chapter 6 (Accessibility and Compliance) — accessibility requirements affect every design decision; read before the labs, not after
- Review 2–3 existing MSS Workshop applications to understand current design patterns and identify inconsistencies

DAILY SCHEDULE

Day 1 — Soldier Centered Design Methodology

Time	Block	Method	Content
0800–0900	1	Lecture	Designer role on MSS; SCD methodology overview; the balanced team model (PM + Designer + SWE); SCD vs. commercial UX
0900–1100	2	Studio	User research planning: writing research plans, interview guides, and contextual inquiry protocols for MSS user populations
1100–1115	—	Break	
1115–1200	3	Lab	Conduct a practice interview session (paired exercise) using SCD semi-structured interview technique
1200–1300	—	Lunch	
1300–1500	4	Studio	Research synthesis: affinity diagramming, problem framing, persona creation from interview data
1500–1515	—	Break	
1515–1700	5	Lecture + Discussion	OPSEC in user research; classification considerations for research artifacts; rank dynamics in research sessions

Evening reading: TM-40N, Chapter 2 (SCD Methodology) — full chapter.

Day 2 — Information Architecture and Visual Design

Time	Block	Method	Content
0800–0830	—	Review	Day 1 questions; persona checkpoint — confirm all trainees have a validated persona
0830–1030	6	Lecture + Studio	Information architecture: decision-first hierarchy; data density; the "glance, scan, commit" framework; spatial consistency
1030–1045	—	Break	

Time	Block	Method	Content
1045– 1200	7	Studio	Visual design for military applications: classification banners, status color systems, typography, field condition constraints
1200– 1300	—	Lunch	
1300– 1500	8	Lab	Workshop layout design: grid system, widget catalog walkthrough, layout patterns (command dashboard, data entry form, drill-down explorer)
1500– 1515	—	Break	
1515– 1700	9	Studio	Design exercise: design a command dashboard for a specific WFF scenario using Workshop patterns and MSS visual standards

Evening reading: TM-40N, Chapter 3 (Information Architecture) and Chapter 4 (Visual Design) — focus on Workshop layout patterns and color system.

Day 3 — Interaction Design and Prototyping

Time	Block	Method	Content
0800– 0830	—	Review	Day 2 questions; dashboard design critique — peer review of command dashboard designs
0830– 1030	10	Lecture + Studio	Interaction design: state mapping (default, loading, empty, error, success); action flows; filter behavior; edge cases
1030– 1045	—	Break	
1045– 1200	11	Studio	Prototyping: low-fi sketches → wireframes; rapid iteration techniques; design tool workflow
1200– 1300	—	Lunch	
1300– 1500	12	Lab	Build an interactive prototype: clickable mockup of a data entry workflow with all states designed
1500– 1515	—	Break	
1515– 1700	13	Studio	Design handoff: producing implementation-ready specifications; data binding documentation; interaction specification format

Evening reading: TM-40N, Chapter 5 (Prototyping and Usability Testing) — focus on usability test protocol.

Day 4 — Accessibility and Usability Testing

Time	Block	Method	Content
0800–0830	—	Review	Day 3 questions; prototype checkpoint — confirm all trainees have a testable prototype
0830–1030	14	Lecture + Lab	Accessibility: Section 508 requirements, WCAG 2.1 AA criteria, automated testing tools, manual testing techniques
1030–1045	—	Break	
1045–1200	15	Lab	Accessibility audit: audit your own prototype against the MSS accessibility checklist; identify and fix issues
1200–1300	—	Lunch	
1300–1500	16	Lab	Usability testing: conduct a usability test with paired trainees serving as representative users; think-aloud protocol
1500–1515	—	Break	
1515–1700	17	Studio	Usability findings synthesis: severity rating, pattern identification, design recommendations

Evening reading: TM-40N, Chapter 7 (Design Governance) — focus on design review process.

Day 5 — Design Governance and Practical Exercise

Time	Block	Method	Content
0800–0900	18	Lecture	Design governance: pattern libraries, design review process, cross-track coordination, the designer's role in sprint ceremonies
0900–1100	19	Exercise	EX_40N Practical Exercise begins — design an MSS application from user research through handoff (see EX_40N for full task list)
1100–1115	—	Break	

Time	Block	Method	Content
1115– 1200	20	Exercise	EX_40N continued
1200– 1300	—	Lunch	
1300– 1500	21	Exercise	EX_40N continued — usability validation and design refinement
1500– 1515	—	Break	
1515– 1630	22	Presentati on	Design presentations: each trainee presents their design, research findings, and handoff package
1630– 1700	23	Evaluatio n	Post-test (EXAM_TM40N_POST); course evaluation; SL 5N pathway discussion

POST-COURSE

- **Evaluation:** EXAM_TM40N_POST administered Day 5 (see schedule)
- **Proficiency exercise:** EX_40N evaluated against Go/No-Go criteria
- **Continuation:** SL 5N — Advanced UI/UX Designer (design systems, DDIL design, coalition UI, DesignOps)
- **Cross-track recommendation:** Attend SL 4J (Program Manager) overview session to understand PM-Designer coordination; attend SL 4L (Software Engineer) overview session to understand implementation constraints