Hauke Sandhaus

Teaching Statement

Ph.D. candidate in Information Science, Cornell Tech
sandhaus@duck.com · hauke.haus
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I teach the way I research: for autonomy. My research shows how designers become pathetic designers, moved by tools, deadlines and norms they take for their own choices. My teaching aims to build the opposite: visionary, conscientious designers who can articulate what they intend, steer AI toward it, and defend it against external influences, such as metrics that nudge them.

A. Teaching Philosophy

I was trained in Human-Computer Interaction myself (B.Sc. Creative Technology, University of Twente; M.Sc. Human-Computer Interaction, Bauhaus-Universität Weimar), and I believe the challenges of the world increasingly require generalist, boundary-crossing thinkers. This is true not only in business, where AI-improved knowledge work makes one-person startups increasingly common, but also in research and development, where AI as a general-purpose technology is creeping into every domain. My underlying teaching outcome is to enable young designers, developers and researchers to still **think slow and deep while working faster**, and to educate the next generation of conscientious AI co-designers and co-thinkers.

This matters because the old signs of good design work no longer show whether the work was done. In my study of eighteen students in an interactive device design course, the tool sat in every step, the two-week deadline rewarded finished work, and unacknowledged use became the norm. For example, one team redrew a model's diagram by hand "to reflect effort" while the design stayed the model's. Design intent survived only where a student brought a conviction firm enough to state and then steered the tool toward it. No student can set that norm alone, so the course has to. This means three things in practice.

First, **intent before generation.** Students record what they intend, what they know and what they do not know before they open an AI tool, so the record of their design predates anything the model produced. Second, **process over polish.** In my classes I rely on fast iterative loops with user testing between them, and each submission names an intent the model did not supply, an alternative the student set aside, and the reason a decision went the way it did; I grade that reasoning rather than the finish of the artifact. Third, **boundaries and exits as competences.** Students decide in advance what the tool may touch and when they will stop using it, and show afterwards where they did. I teach with AI rather than against it: students learn the tools deeply, and learn when not to use them.

B. Teaching Experience

Ethical Vibe Coding (TECHIE 1121, Cornell Tech, Summer 2026). I designed and head-instructed this course for high school students in Cornell Tech's Summer Innovation Intensives. Except for Git familiarity, no programming experience is required. I teach how to use AI ethically, how to build ethical things with AI, how to push back on AI harms, and how to use AI for ethics. Students build real apps with AI coding tools, learn how these tools work, probe bias and vulnerabilities in generated output, and apply the Values at Play framework to their own projects. In the end-of-program survey (16 respondents), **88% of students said they learned "a lot" or "a great deal"**, students rated the content **4.56 out of 5** for how interesting it was, and they rated the program **4.38 out of 5** for making them more interested in studying technology and engineering. For example, one student named the best part of the program as "learning how to vibe code because I believe it will be an essential tool in the future." Cornell Tech asked to teach the course again as a "showstopper" class.

Developing and Designing Interactive Devices (INFO 5345 / CS 5424 / ECE 5413, Cornell Tech, Fall 2023 and Fall 2025). As head TA for Wendy Ju's master's prototyping course, I revised all lab scripts for updated hardware, set up the class infrastructure, managed grading and gave a guest lecture. I worked with many teams on their coding and design problems as they built a working physical–digital prototype every two weeks. In 2025 I updated the course for AI co-design of technology and built WendyTA, an LLM teaching assistant that supports students' projects while prompting reflection rather than supplying

answers. The course has produced **three workshop papers and two full papers**, one published at DIS 2025 and one under review at CHI 2027, and many of its students asked to continue working with me afterwards, including through Specialization Projects (INFO 5920).

Privacy in the Digital Age (CS 5436 / INFO 5303, Cornell Tech, Fall 2024). As head TA for Helen Nissenbaum and Vitaly Shmatikov, I taught the section on usable privacy: when privacy settings are needed, how companies can design them to be usable, and which tricks, such as dark patterns, companies have used to make people share more data than they want, which shows that the "privacy paradox" is largely a product of design. I also created an in-class participatory exercise on evaluating privacy policies. **Nissenbaum and Shmatikov nominated me for the best teaching assistant award** for this course.

HCI and Design (INFO 6410 / CS 5682, Cornell Tech, Fall 2026). In a part-time teaching assistantship with Nicki Dell and Thijs Roumen, I am updating the course for AI co-design and have given full guest lectures.

Conscientious Tech Design Workshop (Siegel PiTech PhD Impact Fellows, Summers 2025 and 2026). With Helen Nissenbaum I co-designed an eight-week workshop that operationalizes Values at Play into whiteboard activities and assignments, so fellows discover, implement and verify values in their own public-interest projects. The 2026 edition was funded by a **Public Interest Responsible Technology Fund teaching grant**.

Further teaching. I taught Human-Computer Interaction with Gilly Leshed, prepared materials for Deep Learning (CS 5787) so that students learn rather than skate by with AI, including final-exam questions that resist AI-assisted answers, and served as a teaching assistant for User Experience and User Research (INFO 5305), Computer-Mediated Communication (INFO 4450, Spring 2022) and Specialization Projects (INFO 5920). I began teaching in 2014, with Arduino programming for secondary-school pupils.

C. Mentorship

I have mentored master's students, visiting researchers and high school students on research in ethical design and human–AI interaction. Mentees have co-authored papers at DIS, CHIWORK and in *Zeitschrift für Psychologie* (including the CHIWORK 2026 Best Late-Breaking Work) and have gone on to design roles at TikTok and Drei Österreich. Students from my courses regularly ask to keep working with me, several of them through Specialization Projects. As in my classroom teaching, my goal is for students to take ownership of their projects; my mentoring statement describes how.

D. Teaching Interests and Goals

I am well equipped to teach undergraduate and graduate courses in human-computer interaction, usable privacy, interaction design, user research and evaluation, and AI ethics. In addition, I am eager to develop three courses:

1. **Ethical Design in the Age of AI** (undergraduate or graduate). Students study how AI systems can undermine, limit, respect or support user autonomy, examine real products through the Autonomy by Design framework, and propose redesigns. The course bridges UX research, philosophy of autonomy and technology policy, and trains designers to understand the human consequences of technical choices.
2. **Ethical Vibe Coding** (introductory, any discipline). Students build working applications with AI coding tools, learn how the tools work, probe bias, manipulation and accessibility in generated output, and apply Values at Play to their own projects. No programming experience is required. The course welcomes students from across disciplines into critical engagement with technology.
3. **Designing for Human Autonomy** (graduate seminar). Students evaluate real AI features and agents with the Autonomy by Design framework, read the philosophical and legal traditions behind it, and redesign a feature from undermining to supporting. The seminar connects values-centered design research to the specific challenges of AI-mediated interaction.

These courses bridge technical courses on machine learning and systems with broader courses on technology and society. I welcome co-teaching with colleagues in computer science, information science

and design, since my courses are where their students encounter users, ethics and consequences. My goal is for students to be able to **think through the influences affecting their work and design thinking** at the speed AI now allows.

Diversity, equity and belonging. The communities most affected by manipulative and autonomy-undermining AI are often the least represented in the classrooms where these systems are designed. Through the Siegel PiTech fellowship I brought ethical design methods to fellows working with under-resourced civic organizations, including YAI; through Ethical Vibe Coding I taught high school students — many from groups underrepresented in computing — to build and audit with AI responsibly. I will continue recruiting and mentoring students from underrepresented groups, designing courses that engage affected communities as participants rather than objects of study, and contributing to efforts to make HCI and design more equitable.