

# Ciara Fabian, MS

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Research Assistant and Instructor with a background in graphic design, game design, animation, user-centered research, immersive technology, and training simulations. Experience in augmented/virtual reality, motion visuals, storytelling, 3D animation, and design for video/audio output. Experience creating wireframes, storyboards, and prototypes for design review and user testing.

## EDUCATION

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**Doctor of Philosophy** in Information Studies Current  
University of Maryland  
2024-2029

- GPA: 4.0
- Deans Fellowship Award

**Master of Science** in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) University of Maryland  
2022-2024

- GPA: 4.0
- Thesis: Studying the Effects of Colors Within Virtual Reality (VR) on Psychological and Physical Behavior

**Bachelor of Fine Arts** in Game Development and Interaction Design Savannah College of Art and  
Design (SCAD)  
2016-2020

- GPA: 3.88
- Graduation with Magna Cum Laude
- Study Abroad Program, Hong Kong, 1/2018 – 3/2018

## PROFESSIONAL HONORS & AFFILIATIONS

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**Honor Society Phi Kappa Phi** 2023-Present

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCES

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**Graduate Research Assistant** 2025-Present  
University of Maryland

- Conduct literature reviews, collect and analyze data, and assist with research projects under faculty supervision.
- Handle tasks including scheduling, organizing files, and contribute to research papers and presentations.

## Research Assistant

2023-Present

Tracy Cherpeski International

- Conduct research on target markets, including geographic location, demographics, and ownership.
- Prepare databases and analyze data findings.
- Maintain accurate and detailed records of all interactions and survey responses.
- Support the design and implementation of initiatives based on qualitative and quantitative data findings.
- Conducted in-depth literature reviews, data analysis, and qualitative research for the white paper *Unlocking Potential: A Business Blueprint for Practice Owners: Strategies for Practice Owners to Reduce Burnout, Optimize Operations and Grow Their Businesses* (Cherpeski, 2024).

## Technical Research Lead

1/2020-3/2020

SCAD Pro Sponsored project – Blackrock

- Assist BlackRock with research and development of concepts for the re-imagination, modernization, and digitalization of the client experience for BlackRock's Institutional Client Business.
- Develop and ensure quality for technical deliverables.
- Create digital and physical prototypes.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

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### Multimedia Specialist

2021-2023

A. Harold & Associates, LLC

- Collaborate with AHA developers and customer experts to develop static and interactive media assets for training products (2D/3D graphics, diagrams, charts, tables, photos, videos, animations, email/web content, infographics, etc.).
- Maintain a high standard of design, creativity, and adaptability to modern and emerging trends/needs.
- Develop and design functional UX/UI prototypes.

### Technical Artist

2020-2021

Design Interactive (DI)

- Develop user interfaces in unity based on existing designs that support DI's mission of providing engineering services and consulting in human-system integration (HSI) by utilizing established software development frameworks and techniques.
- Implement UI/UX designs given the appropriate assets into Unity UI Screens.
- Work with the Unity Animation and Animator systems to animate UI/UX elements.
- Set up UI elements for further implementation by the engineering team.
- Implement technical systems as needed.

### Interactive Developer Intern

1/2020-3/2020

Ninja Multimedia

- Build augmented reality and virtual reality applications for clients.
- Developing and programming in Unity.
- 3D modeling and animating.

## **Game Design Innovator Intern**

5/2019-12/2019

Chick-fil-A Corporate-The Technology Innovation program

- Focusing on creating digital experiences that improve the lives of customers, operators, and team members.
- Build prototypes and experiment with solutions for Chick-fil-A operations.
- Provide demonstrations and presentations of solutions to key stakeholders.
- Utilize 3D modeling, rigging, and animation.
- Integration using Unity3D, game development, augmented reality, and virtual reality.
- Created prototype using augmented reality glasses.
- Utilize storyboards, wireframes, and prototypes in project development.
- Assist with project videos and presentations.

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCES**

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### **Graduate Student Instructor**

2023-2025

University of Maryland

- Teach courses, facilitate discussions and studio lessons, and hold office hours where one-to-one teaching occurs.
- Responsibilities include grading and giving feedback on students' assignments.
- Assist students through the research and design process of projects.

### **Adjunct Faculty, Game Design**

2021-Present

Southern New Hampshire University

- Provide high-quality academic experiences and support students as they work toward educational goals.
- Work collaboratively in a supportive academic environment, partnering with student advising and the academic team to ensure that each student has the support, tools, and resources needed to succeed.

### **Teaching Assistant**

2022-2023

University of Maryland

- Teaching responsibility for laboratory or discussion sessions of a course.
- Assist faculty in grading, advising, and administrative duties for assigned courses.
- Assist with general departmental administrative duties, such as advising or administrating community programs, workshops, etc.

## AWARDS AND GRANTS

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**University of Maryland Iribe Initiative for Inclusion and Diversity in Computing (I4C) Scholarship** 2025

- Awarded for academic excellence and commitment to diversity and inclusion in computing.

2024

**Deans Fellowship Award**

- Awarded for exceptional qualifications and clear promise for outstanding performance in the doctoral program.

**University of Maryland Improvement Grant** 2023

- A competitive internal grant program that provides funding to assist INFO College researchers who could greatly improve their research efforts by utilizing financial support.

**Prysmian Exhibition Award** 2017

- Received for outstanding sculpture design and the purchase of the art Sculpture by the Prysmian Group.

## SKILLS

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**Software/Hardware**

- Maya
- Photoshop
- Adobe XD
- Illustrator
- InDesign
- Unity
- Figma
- Visual Studios
- XR Technology
- Lumin

**Methods and Programming**

- Color Theory Design and Methods
- User Research Methods
- User-Centered Design
- Participatory Design Research Methods
- UI/UX
- HTML/CSS
- C#

**Language**

- English (fluent)
- Spanish (advanced)

## PAPERS AND PRESENTATIONS

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Fabian, C. A., Paletz, S. B. F., Mallick, R., & Kane, A. A. (2026, January 15-16). *Transactive Memory Systems at Game Night: Proposed Research on Varying Types of Teams for In-Person and Digital Games*. INGRoup Midyear Virtual Global Conference. Online.

Fabian, C. A., Paletz, S. B., & Aston, J. (2025). The Effects of Warm Versus Cool Color Palettes Within Virtual Reality. In *Proceedings of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society Annual Meeting* (p. 10711813251367738). Sage CA: Los Angeles, CA: SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10711813251367738>

Fabian, C. A. (2024). Lightning Talk: Studying The Effects of Color Within Virtual Reality (VR). In *Human-Computer Interaction Lab 41st Annual Symposium*. College Park, Maryland; Human-Computer Interaction Laboratory.

Fabian, C. A. (2024). *Studying the Effects of Colors Within Virtual Reality (VR) on Psychological and Physical Behavior* (thesis). University of Maryland DRUM. <https://doi.org/10.13016/hmr-v-aklh>