

Instructor

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Office hours: Wednesdays 10-11:30am and by appointment

Course Information

Class number: 24128, Section 801

Class times: Wednesdays, 5:45-9:00 PM

Room: LEWIS 1508 Campus: Loop

Course homepage: <https://d2l.depaul.edu/>

Course Summary

This course provides an overview of user research and usability evaluation methods. Working as teams, students choose a working computer application and practice course methods on it throughout the term. Students learn to conduct user research to determine user needs and core tasks for the chosen application. User research results are presented in the form of user profiles (aka personas) and task scenarios. The results of user research are then used to guide usability evaluation methods including heuristic evaluation, walkthroughs and usability tests. *Prerequisites: IM 210 or ISM 210.*

Learning Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. apply multiple types of user research,
2. apply multiple types of evaluation of user interfaces,
3. determine which evaluation method is appropriate for a particular situation,
4. describe the role and value of user research and evaluation in the design process,
5. establish useful research and test objectives,
6. effectively communicate the results of user research and evaluation through reports and presentations.

Expectations

The course will involve completing readings before class meetings and preparing for class discussions. Class meetings will involve a combination of lecture, discussions, hands-on activities, presentations of homework projects, and group work. There will be a quiz, a midterm, and a final exam to assess understanding of course topics. Homework projects will be conducted in teams, and are designed to provide skills practice and deeper engagement with course concepts.

Required Texts

- *Observing the User Experience: A Practitioner's Guide to User Research*, 2nd edition. Goodman, Kuniavsky & Moed, Morgan Kaufmann/Elsevier Science, 2012. ISBN: 978-0123848697. Supplemental resources: <http://booksite.elsevier.com/9780123848697/>
- Additional readings as provided

Grading

Coursework includes the following components.

	Grade Proportion
Class Participation	10%
Projects (4)	45%
Quiz	5%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%

Letter grades will be given based on the following minimum percent of total points earned.

A	93.00%	186 points	Excellent
A-	90.00%	180 points	
B+	88.00%	176 points	
B	83.00%	166 points	Very Good
B-	80.00%	160 points	
C+	78.00%	156 points	
C	73.00%	146 points	Satisfactory
C-	70.00%	140 points	
D+	68.00%	136 points	
D	60.00%	120 points	
F	0.00%	0 points	

Class Participation

Class participation points are earned by arriving to class on time, being prepared, contributing to group projects, and being an active participant in class activities. Also see Attendance and Participation details on Page 3.

Projects

Details about each of these projects will be posted in D2L. Work should be submitted to D2L unless otherwise specified.

P1 User Research: Interviews, Personas, and Scenarios

P2 Heuristic Evaluation and Cognitive Walkthrough

P3 Usability Test Plan

P4 Usability Testing and Report

All projects will be completed in groups of three or four. While students will have some control on group selection, the instructor reserves the right to modify groups in order to meet course objectives. While the group may assign a primary role to each group member, all group members are jointly responsible for the entire assignment. Generally, each group member will receive the same grade. However, in some cases, additional credit may go to those who make an exceptional contribution to a project and reduced credit to those who contribute little to a project. Such adjustment of credit would be made in addition to the grade awarded for group participation.

Exams

There will be a quiz, a midterm and final exam to assess understanding of key concepts covered in the course.

Course Schedule

The syllabus and class schedule is tentative and subject to change as the course progresses. If changes are made, they will be addressed during class.

	Date	Topics	Required reading and preparation <i>Additional articles and materials may also be assigned</i>	Due
1	Jan 9	Introduction to user-centered research, evaluation, and usability	OUE, Chapter 1 Introduction OUE, Chapter 3 Balancing Needs Through Iterative Development Seven great myths of usability (link in D2L)	Group formation survey
2	Jan 16	Learning about users: Personas, scenarios, and contextual inquiry	OUE, Chapter 6 Universal Tools: Recruiting and Interviewing OUE, Chapter 9 Field Visits: Learning from Observation OUE, Chapter 17 Research into Action: Representing Insights as Deliverables Optional: <i>OUE, Chapter 15 Analyzing Qualitative Data</i> <i>OUE, Chapter 4 Research Planning</i>	
3	Jan 23 Lab*	Inspection methods: Heuristic evaluation and cognitive walkthroughs	Lewis and Rieman, Ch. 4, Sec. 3 Heuristic analysis Lewis and Rieman, Ch. 4, Sec. 1 Cognitive walkthroughs	Quiz
4	Jan 30	Usability testing: preparing and conducting tests	OUE, Chapter 2 Do a Usability Test Now! OUE, Chapter 11 Usability Tests	P1 User Research: Interviews, Personas, and Scenarios
5	Feb 6	Usability testing: analysis and reporting	OUE, Chapter 18 Reports, Presentations, and Workshops	P2: Heuristic Evaluation and Cognitive Walkthrough
6	Feb 13		<i>Work on projects after test (as time permits)</i>	Midterm Exam
7	Feb 20 Lab*	Comparison Tests. User Modeling. Additional evaluation methods.	<i>TBD</i>	
8	Feb 27 Lab**	Pilot usability testing	<i>TBD</i>	P3: Usability Test Plan
9	Mar 6 Lab*	Additional evaluation methods	OUE, Chapter 16 Automatically gathered information: Usage Data and Customer Feedback	
10	Mar 13	Project Presentations		P4: Usability Test and Report
	Mar 20			Final Exam
	Mar 22			Project Presentation comment deadline

*Location to be determined

** Usability Lab to be confirmed

Project Deadlines

Projects are to be posted to D2L by **12:00 PM** on the due date. Projects will be discussed and shared with peers during class on the due date. Revised projects may be submitted by the following Friday at 12:00 PM; however, I must be informed by Thursday morning that a revision will be submitted. A 10% point reduction will be deducted for each day that a homework assignment is late.

Policies & Expectations

Attendance and Participation

Students are expected to attend all classes and participate in class activities. Take an active role in class discussions, activities, and group work. Be on time. Be a respectful participant by keeping phones in silent mode and being attentive to class presentations, discussions, and activities. Attendance will be taken.

Please communicate with me if you must be absent for any reason. Students are individually responsible for material they may have missed due to absence or tardiness. Furthermore, since some group work will occur during class, a student who misses class will jeopardize their standing with the group.

If you are sick with the flu (fever, aches, pains), don't come to class. I can help make sure you are filled in.

Unexcused absences should not exceed two during the quarter. A third absence will reduce your final grade by one letter grade. Tardiness that exceeds 30 minutes is counted as an absence. Two late arrivals or early departures, or a combination of both, are counted as one absence. Please notify me in advance if there are any special needs.

Exams can only be made up with a serious documented excuse (e.g. illness, death in the family). A make-up exam must be arranged as soon as possible and always before the student attends the next class meeting. Arrangements involving other excuses require prior permission from the instructor.

Coursework Grade Review Requests

Every effort is made to grade in a fair and consistent manner. Should a disagreement arise about a coursework grade, the student may submit a grade review request in writing to the instructor. The request must be submitted within 48 hours after the assignment grade has been posted. The request must include the student's argument for a different grade evaluation, based on verifiable evidence presented by the student. The instructor handles grade review requests and responds to the student with a review decision as soon as possible.

Online Instructor Evaluation

Evaluations are a way for students to provide valuable feedback regarding their instructor and the course. Detailed feedback will enable the instructor to continuously tailor teaching methods and course content to meet the learning goals of the course and the academic needs of the students. They are a requirement of the course and are key to continue to provide you with the highest quality of teaching. The evaluations are anonymous; the instructor and administration do not track who entered what responses. A program is used to check if the student completed the evaluations, but the evaluation is completely separate from

the student's identity. Since 100% participation is our goal, students are sent periodic reminders over two weeks. Students do not receive reminders once they complete the evaluation.

Academic Integrity Policy

This course will be subject to the faculty council rules on the Academic Integrity Policy. Cheating includes plagiarism, fraud, and other forms of academic dishonesty. University guidelines on academic integrity and plagiarism can be found at <http://academicintegrity.depaul.edu>.

Plagiarism

The university and school policy on plagiarism can be summarized as follows: Students in this course, as well as all other courses in which independent research or writing play a vital part in the course requirements, should be aware of the strong sanctions that can be imposed against someone guilty of plagiarism. If proven, a charge of plagiarism could result in an automatic F in the course and possible expulsion. The strongest of sanctions will be imposed on anyone who submits as his/her own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report, or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. If you have any questions or doubts about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials, be sure to consult the instructor.

Incomplete Grades

An incomplete grade is given only for an exceptional reason such as a death in the family, a serious illness, etc. Any such reason must be documented. Please note that University guidelines require that you must be earning a passing grade at the time you request an incomplete grade. You should have completed most of the course, with at most one or two major forms of evaluation missing. Any incomplete request must be made at least two weeks before the final, and approved by the Dean of the College of Computing and Digital Media. Any consequences resulting from a poor grade for the course will not be considered as valid reasons for such a request.

Resources for Students with Disabilities

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate accommodation based on your needs, contact the instructor as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure that you have contacted either:

- PLuS Program (for LD, AD/HD) at 773-325-4239 in SAC 220
- The Office for Students with Disabilities (for all other disabilities) at 773-325-7290 Student Center 307