The University of Texas at Austin
School of Information

Fall 2018

INF 385P - Usability
Unique: 27739
Room: UTA 1.502
Mon 3:00 - 6:00pm

Instructor

Eric Nordquist
eric.nordquist@ischool.utexas.edu

Office Hours:

UTA 5.426
By appointment

TA

Jin Gao
Jin.gao@utexas.edu

Course Description

The roles and responsibilities of individuals contributing on a User Experience (UX) team vary widely from company to company. A common UX team would include members with specialties in Visual Design, Interaction Design, and User Research. This course will focus solely on the role of User Researcher and will teach the skills necessary to be successful in an industry environment.

Students will learn the methods used during a typical product development lifecycle with a focus on data-driven results aimed at ensuring a successful product adoption. We will pull from methods created within Human Factors and other behavioral sciences to fully understand our users and adopt them to fit in the fast paced, Agile, development frameworks in most corporate settings.

The class will cover three major areas:
1. user research methods used throughout the entire product development lifecycle; both generative/formative as well as evaluative methodologies
2. theoretical underpinnings of user behavior from the behavioral sciences
3. the justification (ROI) for the application of user research in a product development lifecycle

Objectives:
The student successfully completing this class will:
-   have a working understanding of the methods used by a user researcher during a product development lifecycle
-   understand the scientific background of the various methodologies and the advantages and disadvantages of using each methodology
-   learn the value of a data-driven approach to user research and how a focus on ROI can help you be successful in a business environment

Class Format:
This is a hands-on, project focused course, so attendance and participation in class are critical to individual success in this course and to the success of the course. You need to come to class prepared to participate in small group and full class discussions and project work, to complete all required readings prior to class, and to submit assignments on time.

The course has been designed so that the first several weeks will introduce you to the various user research methodologies, behavioral science theories, and responsibilities necessary to successfully complete a generative/formative research project. The remainder of the semester will focus on evaluative/summative stage of user research applying the techniques learned on various a single project representative of what which would be found in a corporate environment.

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Prior to most class meetings, you will submit a reading summary in Canvas based on that week's readings. We will start each class with a group discussion of the readings for that week pulling from your submissions.

This semester will focus on one project for the semester that will result in a complete portfolio piece.

Grades:

Class Attendance and Participation (20%)
Your attendance and class participation grade will be calculated by multiplying the numerical assessment of your class participation by the percentage of classes that you attend (with exceptions made for documented, university-recognized absences as noted above). Regular attendance and active participation in each class session are critical for receiving a good grade in this course. For example, if you actively participate in each class meeting, you will receive a full letter grade higher than if you were to skip half of the classes or to be half-awake for all of the classes.

Reading Summaries (30%)
Most weeks, you will submit a reading summary in Canvas addresses a theme that spans all readings for the week. To receive full credit, you must explicitly refer to and synthesize all readings for the given week. A good rule of thumb is 1-2 paragraphs per chapter assigned, so a highl-level, concise summary demonstrating you comprehended the key takeaways along with any of your questions or comments. Connecting with earlier weeks is strongly encouraged when appropriate, however please do make sure to still discuss each of the readings for the current week as well. You will be graded on your ability to refer to and synthesize all readings and to provide an insightful perspective on the readings through your intellectual curiosity. Reading summaries are due by Monday at noon.

Course Projects (50%; 25% project 1, 25% project 2)
Your two projects will be graded on the following:
    60% - Ability to demonstrate knowledge of the topics covered throughout the course and how it was applied to your project
    20% - Delivered on schedule
    20% - Deliverable is of the quality expected in a corporate environment

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Required Textbooks:
(Use code 'profnordy' for 20% off the first three at rosenfeldmedia.com)
Sharon, T. (2016). Validating product ideas: through lean user research. New York: Rosenfeld Media. ISBN: 9781933820293

Portigal, S. (2013). Interviewing users: how to uncover compelling insights. Brooklyn, NY: Rosenfeld Media. ISBN: 9781933820118

Bojko, A. (2013). Eye tracking the user experience, a practical guide to research. New York: Rosenfeld Media. ISBN 1933820918

Fitzpatrick, R. (2014). The mom test how to talk to customers and learn if your business is a good idea when everyone is lying to you. London: Foundercentric.

Tullis, Tom, and Bill Albert. (2013). Measuring the User Experience: Collecting, Analyzing, and Presenting Usability Metrics. 2nd edition Amsterdam: Elsevier/Morgan Kaufmann. ISBN: 0124157815

Goodman, E., Kuniavsky, M., & Moed, A. (2012). Observing the user experience: a practitioners guide to user research. Amsterdam: Morgan Kaufmann. ISBN: 9780123848697

Recommended; for those wanting more:
(Use code 'profnordy' for 20% off these first two as well)
Young, I. (2015). Practical empathy: For collaboration and creativity in your work. Brooklyn, NY: Rosenfeld Media.

Quesenbery, W., & Brooks, K. (2010). Storytelling for user experience: Crafting stories for better design. Brooklyn: Rosenfeld Media.

Other readings will be supplied in Canvas ahead of our class meeting.

Misc
- Policy on Academic Integrity - Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct.

- Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations. Other awesome resources are available on their website: http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/

- Religious Holy Days - Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. Sections 51.911 and 51.925 of the Texas Education Code address absences by students and instructors for religious holy days. Section 51.911 states that a student shall be excused from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence andshall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy required students to notify each of their instructors as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made. Section 51.925 prohibits the university from discriminating against or penalizing an instructor who is absent from class for the observance of a religious holy day. Proper notice must be given to the department chair. Prior to the begin of classes each semester, the instructor must provide the department chair a list of classes that will be missed due to observance of a religious holy day. The list must be personally delivered, acknowledged and dated by the chair, or sent via certified mail, return receipt requested. Consistent with regular university policy, the instructor is responsible for finding a qualified substitute UT Austin instructor for any missed class(es).

Schedule:

CLASS	DATE	TOPICS	COME PREPARED TO DISCUSS
	9/3	*NO CLASS — LABOR DAY*	
1	9/10	- Syllabus/Canvas Review - Project Overview - Lecture: Generative vs Summative - Lecture: Phases of a UX project, Client Kickoff, Stakeholder Interviews	Reading summary in by 9/7 Portigal - Ch.1, 2, 3, and 4 Fitzpatrick - Ch.
2	9/17	- Reading Discussion - Lecture: Contextual Inquiry, Field Observation, PII and Consent (take training) - Client Kickoff Meeting	Reading summary in by 9/14 Sharon - Ch. 1 and 2 Goodman - Ch. 4 and 6 Fitzpatrick - Ch.
3	9/24	- Reading Discussion - Lecture: Research Design, Test Plan, Interview Script, Task Analysis, ROI	Reading summary in by 9/21 Goodman - Ch. 8, 9, 17 Tullis - Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4
4	10/1	- Reading Discussion - Lecture: Competitive Evaluations, Heuristic Evaluations	Reading summary in by 9/28 Sharon - Ch. 3 and 4 Portigal - Ch. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 (books done) Journey Map Article
5	10/8	- Reading Discussion - Lecture : Personas, Scenarios, Journey Mapping, Strategic Storytelling (symposium pdf), Cognitive Empathy	Reading summary in by 10/5 Goodman - Ch. 5 and 7 Sharon - Ch. 5 and 6 Affinity Diagram Article
6	10/15	- Reading Discussion - Lecture: Creating Reports	Reading question in by 10/12 Tullis - Ch. 5 and 6 Sharon - Ch. 7, 8, and 9 (done)
7	10/22	- Lecture: Placeholder for spillover	Reading summary in by 10/19 Goodman - Ch. 11, 12, 13
8	10/29	Present Project 1	Reading summary in by 10/26 Tullis - Ch. 7, 8, and 9 (done)

Schedule:

CLASS	DATE	TOPICS	COME PREPARED TO DISCUSS
10	11/5	- Kickoff Evaluative Phase - Lecture - Sample user test plans, scripts, data collection - Biometric (IX Lab) - Introduction	Reading summary in by 11/2 Goodman - Ch. 14, 15, and 18 (done)
11	11/12	- Reading Discussion - Lecture: TBD	Reading summary in by 11/9 Bojko - Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5
12	11/19	- Reading Discussion - Lecture: TBD	Reading summary in by 11/16 Bojko - Ch. 6, 7, 8 and 9
13	11/26	- Reading Discussion - Lecture: TBD	No reading summary due to holiday Bojko - Ch. 10, 11, 12, and 13 (done)
14	12/3	- Reading Discussion - Lecture: TBD	Presentations in Canvas 11/30
15	12/10	Final Presentations	Presentations due in Canvas by 12/7