

INF385K: Projects in Human-Computer Interaction

Instructor: Dr. Jacek Gwizdka

Syllabus – Spring 2017

Instructor: Dr. Jacek Gwizdka

Office: [UTA](#) 5.536

Office Hours: By appointment

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Email: jacekg@ischool.utexas.edu (**please always include INF385K-HCI in the email's subject line**)

TA: Ms. Xueshu Chen

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Class meetings: Thursdays 12pm-2:50pm, [UTA](#) 1.502

Canvas @ UT: <https://utexas.instructure.com/>

Course schedule: in Canvas

Course Announcements (a.k.a. mailing list): via Canvas (make sure to configure your Canvas settings to receive notifications about announcement and messages)

Note: The class meetings schedule, along with assigned readings, and assignment due dates is in a separate document.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The spring 2017 edition of Projects in HCI (INF385K - 27973) will cover multiple aspects of conducting research projects in Human-Computer Interaction with a focus on user research methods in the lab equipped with a state-of-the-art eye-tracking and other devices. Typically, the course will emphasize methods for evaluating user experience and user interfaces. It will offer an opportunity to deepen your knowledge of usability testing and user interface evaluation and to sharpen your skills.

Class time will be split between (typically short) content-based lectures, reading discussions, and project work. The part of class time used for lectures will be devoted to highlighting course materials. A few class meetings will be devoted to project work – the project will be the major student effort in this course. Student teams will be able to shape their own idea for the project within thematic constraints and challenges given by the instructor. Student projects will take advantage of the state-of-the-art eye-tracking equipment in the IX lab.

NOTE: Students taking this course are expected to have some previous experience in HCI gained either by having taken a course in HCI/UX/usability/IA or a related area, or by having an equivalent work experience. Please contact instructor before registering for this course.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this course students will:

- further their HCI knowledge by applying it in new and practical situations;
- learn about eye-trackers and their use as a UX data collection method;
- learn how to combine a variety of evaluation methods (including eye-tracking);
- learn how to design and conduct user studies employing the above methods;
- be prepared for further training and research in this area.

CLASS STRUCTURE and ORGANIZATION

The primary activity will be a semester-long, hands-on **HCI research project**. Student groups (2-4 students) will engage in selected stages of a typical HCI project, including identifying and understanding the problem, proposing evaluation plan, creating detailed research study protocol, executing it in the lab, and presenting the results. Student groups will be able to shape their own idea for the project within thematic constraints and challenges given by the instructor. The semester-long projects are expected to result in a thorough evaluation of some aspect of user experience with an existing web-based user interface. The results will be described in the final paper. The projects will be expected to produce results that are publishable in an international conference and the final papers will be expected to be ready for a submission to a major international conference (such as, ACM CHI, ASIST, CHIIR, SIGIR, ETRA, UM, ICMI, IUI). The project is described in more detail in a separate document.

In addition to the project, the course uses readings, discussions, presentations and other activities in support of learning. The goal is to create a learning environment in the classroom where questions and concepts are discussed and analyzed and skills are developed collaboratively. This format requires participation of all class members. Students are expected to:

- Participate actively in the course project and in all group activities.
- Attend all class sessions; if a student misses a class, it is his or her responsibility to arrange with another student to obtain all notes, handouts and assignment sheets.
- Read all material prior to class; students are expected to use the course readings to inform their classroom participation and enable them to perform the class activities and assignments.
- Hand in all deliverables fully and on time. Late submissions will not be accepted unless an emergency is involved. In the event of an emergency, the student must contact the instructor as soon as possible. (see also Grading and Policies)
- Educate themselves and their peers. The successful completion of this course and their participation in the information professions depend upon the students' willingness to demonstrate initiative and creativity. Your participation in the professional and personal growth of your colleagues is essential to your success as well as theirs. Such collegiality is at the heart of professional practice. The in-class discussion of the assignments is designed to encourage this kind of collaboration.
- Participate in all class discussions.
- If needed, ask for additional help from the instructor or the Teaching Assistant.

HANDS-ON, PRACTICAL APPROACH

This course takes a practical, applied, hands-on approach, based on the application of established best practices, principles, and proven methods to ensure a quality user experience.

MY PERSONAL GOALS FOR YOU IN THE COURSE

In addition to content-specific objectives reflected by the topics in the course calendar, I have these personal goals for each student:

- to get you to think deeply and carefully about the subject,
- to help you to genuinely like the subject,
- to provide knowledge and skills useful to you in your career,
- to engender a deeper interest that can be pursued beyond this course,
- to make you proud of your achievements in this course, especially of your project work, and,
- hopefully, to have a little fun in the process 😊

BOOKS AND READINGS

Selected chapters will be assigned from other books:

1. **AB:** Bojko, A. (2014) (2013). Eye Tracking the User Experience: A Practical Guide to Research. Rosenfeld Media.
2. **JBAS:** Bergstrom, J. R., & Schall, A. J. (2014). Eye Tracking in User Experience Design. Elsevier Science & Technology Books. Full text available online at UT library.

Note: Additional readings may be assigned as needed.

CLASS LECTURE SLIDES

The PDF versions of class lecture slides, if applicable, will be posted on Canvas. You have permission to print a copy for your personal use; please do not post or share them online. This policy applies to all other course handouts too.

GRADING

Class participation (includes participation in class discussions)	5%
<i>EITHER:</i> Reading discussant in class (once per semester)	10%
<i>OR:</i> Eye-tracking paper critique (in class) (once per semester)	10%
Project (teamwork, unless otherwise noted)	70%
P1: Proposal	P/F
P2: Initial evaluation plan	P/F
P3: Detailed research protocol (Canvas submission)	P/F
P3a: Research protocol submission to IRB	N/A
P4: Project presentation (poster)	10%
P5: Final paper	60%
Total	100%

Note: Intermediate project phases are not graded explicitly. However, you will be receiving feedback on your work along with assessment of how well you did.

GRADING SCALE

- 96 or above (A: superior), 90-95 (A-: distinguished)
- 87-89 (B+: good), 84-86 (B: satisfactory), 80-83 (B-: barely satisfactory)
- unsatisfactory: 77-79 (C+), 74-76 (C), 70-73 (C-).

Note: Final grading does not happen just by calculations. I take into account many factors, and so your “Canvas points/%” are only a rough indication of the final grade. Ask when in doubt.

HOMEWORK

All assignments and project deliverable due dates are on the course schedule and calendar (on Canvas). Even if the instructor doesn't announce each due date in class, it's your job to know when you should be working on one and when they are due. Please ask when in doubt.

Submitting written homework and assignments

You must prepare your assignments using a word processor and submit it by uploading to Canvas by the due date/time. Please always use appropriate three- or four-letter file extensions in submitted filename (e.g., .docx for Word files, .pdf for Adobe portable document format. Please avoid submitting zip files). Assignments usually may not be submitted via email to either the professor or a TA.

Important: All documents that you are submitting should include on the front page of your submission your name (spelled in the same way as in the course roster), course number/name, instructor's name, semester and the date of submission. For group work, if applicable, please also always include on the front page all group member names, your project group number, and your project short name (or title). **Warning:** If you do not follow these requirements, your submission may be returned without a grade and without a possibility to re-submit it.

Note: All students are expected to have completed IRB certification for conducting studies with human subjects (including financial conflict of interest (FCOI)). If you have not done it as a part of another class, the deadline for this course is listed on the course schedule.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class participation includes active participation in lectures, presentations (Q&A) and in classroom discussions.

CLASS POLICIES

Due dates and times for handing in homework and project assignments

Unless otherwise indicated, all homework and project assignments must be turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. You should think of all due dates for assignments, especially project assignments, as firm. The tight schedule of deliverables throughout the whole semester makes it nearly impossible to slip or extend due dates. Any assignment that you do not hand in on time may be penalized in grading. If you are not able to complete an assignment by the due date, it would be best for you to hand in as much of it as you have done. You must prepare your assignments using a word processor and submit it by uploading to Canvas by the due date/time. Please do **not** submit links to Google Docs. Assignments usually may not be submitted via email to either the professor or a TA.

Attendance

You will not be graded directly on attendance. You are adults in a graduate-level course and are *expected* to attend every class. Beyond the occasional need to be absent from class for a good reason, please consider that much of the learning for the course occurs in class. You cannot participate in this learning if you are not present.

If you have to miss class for an extended period due to a protracted illness or similar reason, we will treat your needs as a special case and I will do everything I can to help you survive.

Computer use in the classroom

You may use your laptops and other computing devices (e.g., tablets, smartphones) in the classroom. However, their use during class time is **restricted** to **class related activities**. Students who use their devices for non-class related activities will be excused from the class and will have points deducted for their final grade.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, as defined in the 1995 Random House Compact Unabridged Dictionary, is the "use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work." (as cited in Plagiarism (2017). Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism> accessed 2017.01.16.) If you use words or ideas that are not your own you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism. Here's a resource designed to help you avoid plagiarism: www.lib.utexas.edu/plagiarism

Academic Honor Code

You are encouraged to discuss assignments with classmates, but anything submitted must reflect your own, original work. If in doubt, ask the instructor. Plagiarism (as described above) and similar conduct represents a serious violation of UT's Honor Code and standards of conduct:

- http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis_plagiarism.php
- <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/conduct.php>

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Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to severe disciplinary penalties, such as automatically failing the course and potentially being dismissed from the University. **PLEASE do not take the risk.** We are REQUIRED to automatically report any suspected case to central administration for investigation and disciplinary hearings. Honor code violations ultimately harm yourself as well as other students, and the integrity of the University, academic honesty is strictly enforced. For more information, see the Student Judicial Services site: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs>.

Notice about students with disabilities

The University of Texas at Austin provides appropriate accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To determine if you qualify, please contact the Dean of Students at 512-471-6529 or UT Services for Students with Disabilities. If they certify your needs, we will work with you to make appropriate arrangements. UT SSD Website: <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd>

Coping with stress and personal hardships

The [Counseling and Mental Health Center](#) offers a variety of services for students, including both individual counselling and [groups and classes](#), to provide support and assistance for

anyone coping with difficult issues in their personal lives. As mentioned above, life brings unexpected surprises to all of us. If you are facing any personal difficulties in coping with challenges facing you, definitely consider the various services offered and do not be shy to take advantage of them if they might help. These services exist to be used.

Notice about missed work due to religious holy days

A student who misses an examination, work assignment, or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence, provided that he or she has properly notified the instructor. It is the policy of the University of Texas at Austin that the student must notify the instructor at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates he or she will be absent to observe a religious holy day. For religious holy days that fall within the first two weeks of the semester, the notice should be given on the first day of the semester. The student will not be penalized for these excused absences, but the instructor may appropriately respond if the student fails to complete satisfactorily the missed assignment or examination within a reasonable time after the excused absence.

Weather contingencies

If the university is closed (for any reason) on an assignment due date, the assignment will be due at the beginning of the next class.

Electronic mail Notification Policy

In this course e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. You will be responsible for **checking your e-mail regularly** for class work and announcements. If you are an employee of the University, your e-mail address in Canvas is your employee address.

All email concerning the class should be addressed to the TA with a copy to the instructor. We will sort out which of us should act on the message and will make every effort to answer your email in a timely fashion. However, you should not necessarily always expect to get an immediate reply. In particular, don't expect to get answers to questions about a homework or project assignment within the last few hours before that assignment is due.

Please put **INF385K-HCI** as part of the subject line of your email; that will help us identify your emails more quickly.

The University has an official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. Read the policy: <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>. You can find and change your official email address of record at https://utdirect.utexas.edu/apps/utd/all_my_addresses

INF385K: Projects In HCI – Instructor: Dr. Jacek Gwizdka
Course Schedule (subject to *change*) – Spring 2017

#	Date	Topic	Readings (chapters to read <i>before</i> class)	In class activity	Due - Project deliverables... (due at the beginning of class, except as indicated)
1	Jan 19	Introductions	Syllabus	Introductions	
2	Jan 26	Eye-tracking: Introduction	JBAS:1-2 AB:1-3	IX lab: eye-tracker quick view	IRB. Students should complete IRB certification P0. Project Teams
3	Feb 2	Eye-tracking in usability. Eye-tracking web & mobile users	JBAS:3,5-8	1. Eye-tracking paper critique (1) Reading discussion (2) IX lab: eye-tracker intro	P1. Project Proposal
4	Feb 9	Eye-tracking other media and populations	JBAS:9-11, 12-13	2. Eye-tracking paper critique (1) Reading discussion (2) Discuss project proposals	
5	Feb 16	Eye-tracking: planning, design, combining with other methods	AB:4,5,6,7	3. Eye-tracking paper critique (1) Reading discussion (2)	P2. Evaluation plan
6	Feb 23	Eye-tracking: conducting a study	AB:8,9	4. Eye-tracking paper critique (1) Reading discussion (1) IX lab: eye-tracker use	
7	Mar 2	Mid-term project presentations & discussions		5. Eye-tracking paper critique (1) Discuss projects	P3. Research protocol (Canvas submission)
8	Mar 9*	Project work		Project work	P3a. Submit research protocol to IRB
9	Mar 23	Eye-tracking: Data extraction and preparation for analysis	AB:10-11	6. Eye-tracking paper critique (1) Reading discussion (1) IX lab: eye-tracking software	
10	Mar 30	Eye-tracking: Data analysis	AB:12-13	7. Eye-tracking paper critique (1) Reading discussion (1) IX lab: eye-tracking software	
11	Apr 6	Eye-tracking: Data analysis		8. Eye-tracking paper critique (1)	
12	Apr 13	Eye-tracking: Combining with other data	JBAS:4	9. Eye-tracking paper critique (1) Reading discussion (1)	
13	Apr 20	Project		Project work	
14	Apr 27	Project		Project work	
15	May 4	Final project presentations			P4. Project presentation and P5. final paper

* Dr. Gwizdka away at an academic conference.

Readings are from: **AB** - Bojko, A. (2013). Eye Tracking the User Experience: A Practical Guide to Research. Rosenfeld Media. **JBAS** – Bergstrom, J. R., & Schall, A. J. (2014). Eye Tracking in User Experience Design. Elsevier Science & Technology Books.

Note: Additional readings may be assigned as needed.