

Spring 2019

INF 385P - Usability
Unique: 27495
Room: UTA 1.502
Wed 12:00 - 3:00pm

Instructor

Eric Nordquist
eric.nordquist@ischool.utexas.edu

Office Hours:

UTA 5.426
Friday 10:00 - 3:00pm
(email for appointment)

TA
TBD

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 basics of usability studies and get experience with some of the common methods used during a typical product development lifecycle. We will 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. This course will focus on the evaluative, or summative, aspects of the design process.

The class will cover three major areas:

1. the role of usability testing in the design process, how usability testing can provide answers for certain questions, and experience with basic evaluations and tests
2. the process of planning, conducting, synthesizing, and reporting the results from usability studies
3. 'real-world' application of these skills using industry projects

Objectives

The student successfully completing this class will:

- an basic understanding of qualitative and quantitative methods
- a focus on evaluative phase of the product development lifecycle
- 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 course is a combination of intensive readings as well as a semester long project. There will be a lot of group work each class meetings, 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.

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Grades

All assignments are due at midnight of the date listed.

Assignments will either be uploaded to Canvas or UT Box (depending on file size). Specific instructions will be provided for each assignment in the instructions provided for that assignment in Canvas.

Each student will be required to present one reading presentation. See Canvas for the assigned reading assignments and dates for the in-class presentations. There is also a PDF containing the instructions for the reading presentations.

Along with the deliverables for your course project, you will also be graded at two intervals by your group members. Your group members will grade you based on your participation and quality of your work. These grades will be averaged to compute an overall group member review grade.

Grade Breakdown:

- 10% - Reading Presentation (Individual)
- 5% - Proposed Project Plan and Gantt Chart (group)
- 10% - Heuristic Evaluation (group)
- 10% - Competitive Analysis (group)
- 5% - Recruitment Screener (group)
- 15% - Test Packet - Moderator Script and Participant Packet (group)
- 35% - Final Project Presentation (group)
- 10% - Your Review by Group Members

Discussion Groups

I've setup weekly discussion groups inside of Canvas for you to post questions, comments, insights about the readings for that week.

I encourage you to use this feature as it is a great way to get viewpoints from classmates you may not have the opportunity to talk with on a regular basis.

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Required Textbooks

(Use code 'profnordy' for 20% off the two books from rosenfeldmedia.com)

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. ISBN: 1492180742

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

Rubin, J., & Chisnell, D. (2008). Handbook of usability testing: How to plan, design, and conduct effective tests (2nd ed.). Indiana: Wiley. ISBN: 0470185481

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

Optional Textbooks:

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

Spatz, C. (2019). Exploring statistics: Tales of distributions. Conway, AR: Outcrop. ISBN: 978-0-9963392-2-3

Spencer, D., & Garrett, J. J. (2009). Card sorting: Designing usable categories. Brooklyn, NY: Rosenfeld Media. ISBN: 1-933820-07-1

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/>



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- 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 and shall 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:

WK	DATE	TOPICS	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
1	1/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Syllabus/Canvas Review - Historical Basis - Generative vs Summative - Phases of a UX project, Client Kickoff, Stakeholder Interviews - Dr. Kahneman Lecture 	<p><i>Required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fitzpatrick - pg. 1-64 - Article 1 - Article 2 	
2	1/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading Presentations (2 presentations) - Lecture: Intro to Usability Testing and Methods - Client Kickoff 1 - Client Kickoff 2 	<p><i>Required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rubin & Chi... Ch. 1-3 - Tullis & Alb... Ch. 1 - Articles 3 & 4 <p><i>Optional</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portigal Ch. 1 	Sign up for Teams (Due 2/5)
3	2/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading Presentations (2 presentations) - Lecture: Other Usability Methods, Task Analysis - Heuristic Evaluation Principles - Group Work - Gantt Chart, Who Are Your Users 	<p><i>Required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rubin & Chi... Ch. 5&6 - Tullis & Alb... Ch 2 - Articles 5, 6, 7, 8 <p><i>Optional</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portigal Ch. 2 	
4	2/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading Presentations (3 presentations) - Lecture: Test Plan Creation & Competitive Analysis - Lecture: Screeners & Recruiting - Groups Work 	<p><i>Required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rubin & Chi... Ch. 4&7 - Tullis & Alb... Ch 3 - Articles 9 & 10 <p><i>Optional</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portigal Ch. 3 	Project Plan and Gantt Chart (Due 2/19)
5	2/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading Presentations (4 presentations) - Lecture: Test Script and Participant Packets - Lecture: Tasks/Scenarios - Group Work 	<p><i>Required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rubin & Chi... Ch. 8 - Tullis & Alb... Ch. 4,5,6 - Portigal Ch. 4 & 5 	Heuristic Evaluations (Due 2/27)
6	2/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading Presentations (1 presentations) - Group Work 	<p><i>Required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rubin & Chi... Ch. 9 - Tullis & Alb... Ch. 7 - Portigal Ch. 6 - Article 11, 12, 13 	
7	3/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reading Presentations (2 presentations) - Group Work 	<p><i>Required</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Portigal Ch. 7, 8, 9 - Article 14 	Competitive Analysis (Due 3/10) CITI Training (Due 3/13)

Schedule:

WK	DATE	TOPICS	READINGS	ASSIGNMENTS
8	3/13	- Project Checkpoint - Group Work	<i>Optional</i> - Article 21	Screeener, Test Packet (Due 3/17) Group Grade pt 1
	3/20	SPRING BREAK - NO CLASS		
9	3/27	- Lecture TBD - Interview Participants - Group Work		
10	4/3	- Reading Presentations (3 presentations) - Lecture - Code Book, Synthesis, Affinity Diagram - Interview Participants (cont'd) - Group Work	<i>Required</i> - Rubin & Chi... Ch. 11 - Tullis & Alb... Ch. 8 - Articles 15, 16, 17, 22	
11	4/10	- Reading Presentations (3 Presentations) - Lecture - Reporting, Storytelling, Journey Map, Card Sort, Tree Test - Guest Lecture: Dave Yates (Role of Highlight Footage) - Group Work	<i>Required</i> - Rubin & Chi... Ch. 12 - Articles 18, 19, 20	
12	4/17	- Lecture - Journey Map, Card Sort, Tree Test - Group Work	<i>Optional</i> - Spencer Ch. 1-4	Draft Presentations (Due 4/21)
13	4/24	- Lecture - Content Strategy - Group Work	<i>Optional</i> - Spencer Ch. 5-8	
14	5/1	- Lecture - Placeholder - Group Work	<i>Optional</i> - Spencer Ch. 9-11	Presentations Due (Due 5/5)
15	5/8	Client Presentations		Group Grade pt 2

Instructions:

While every student is still responsible for completing the readings each week, each of you will also take turns leading one presentation of a selected reading which will count towards your overall grade. These presentations are meant to prompt in-class discussions and provide students with an opportunity to discuss their thoughts from the week's readings. Your presentations should be appx 20 min in length (be sure to practice your timing) and include the following:

- A brief summary of the reading
- What key takeaways do you have from the reading
- What does the article add to your learning
- Were there any topics you found confusing, had questions about
- How does the information presented tie in with the other learnings you've had in the course
- Feel free to find additional material related to the topic you are presenting that will help support your presentation (other websites, books, videos, etc.)

Your presentation should demonstrate that you have:

- Thought critically about your article
- Taken a position on either agreeing or disagreeing with the author and clearly stated your position
- Provide questions meant to provoke class discussion

Grading Rubric

	Needs Major Support (0)	Emerging (1)	Developing (2)	Competent (3)	Proficient (4)	Exemplary (5)
(25% for each category) Comprehension	Demonstrates a basic understanding of the content		Clear understanding conveyed in presentation		In-depth understanding and summary	
Discussion of key topics	Key points covered		Numerous major and minor points explored		Significant depth given to key topics	
Critical thought	Explores ideas contained in article		Additional unique insights provided		Challenging insights and tie-in to past topics	
Creativity	Minimal exploration of insights		Explores multiple ideas with some risk		Generates unique insights at risk of challenging convention	