

Fall 2017

INF 385P - Usability

Unique: 28270

Room: UTA 1.204

Mon 9:00am - 12:00pm

Instructor

Eric Nordquist

eric.nordquist@ischool.utexas.edu

Office Hours:

UTA 5.426

By appointment

TA

Elizabeth Fletcher

ta_pool@ischool.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 be successful. The remainder of the semester will focus on applying the techniques learned on various projects representative of those found in an corporate environment.

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Prior to most class meetings, you will submit a discussion question in Canvas based on that week's readings. I will select discussion questions for us to discuss. First, the authors of the selected questions will read their discussion questions to the class. Next, you will work in small groups to discuss each question (group assignments will change each week). Finally, we will share insights from group discussions with the class.

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.

Discussion Questions (20%)

Each week, you will post a discussion question that 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. 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. Prior to coming to class, you should examine your colleagues' questions and be prepared to discuss them in class. 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. **Discussion questions are due by Friday at noon.**

Group Participation (10%)

One of the most important skills necessary to be successful in a business environment is the ability to work well with others in cross-disciplined groups. Each of your team members will assess your contributions to the group and the average of these assessments will be used in the calculation of your final grade.

Generative/Formative Project (25%)

This will be the first project we work on and will be graded by 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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Evaluative Project (25%)

This will be the first project we work on and will be graded by 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

Textbooks:

(Use code 'profnordy' for 20% off the first three)

Sharon, T. (2016). Validating product ideas: through lean user research. New York: Rosenfeld Media. ISBN: 9781933820293

Lichaw, D. (2016). The users journey: storymapping products that people love. Brooklyn, NY: Rosenfeld Media. ISBN: 9781933820316

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

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

Other Readings:

These 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.



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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:

CLASS	DATE	TOPICS	COME PREPARED TO DISCUSS
1	9/4	NO CLASS - LABOR DAY	
2	9/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Syllabus/Canvas Review - Lecture: Generative/Formative vs Evaluative/Summative - Go over common questions for 'client kickoff' 	Sharon - Introduction and Ch. 1, 2, and 3 Goodman - Ch. 1, 2, and 3
3	9/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group question discussion - Lecture - Client Kickoff Meeting 	Reading question in by 9/15 Sharon - Ch. 4 Goodman - Ch. 4, and 5 Portigal - Ch. 1, 2, 3, and 4
4	9/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group question discussion - Group - start Test Plan 	Reading question in by 9/22 Portigal - Ch. 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (done)
5	10/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group question discussion - Lecture - Group - continue Test Plan 	Reading question in by 9/29 Goodman - Ch. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 12
6	10/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present/Critique Test Plan - Presenter - Affinity Diagram - Group work 	Test plan due in Canvas 10/6 Survey Article Journey Map Article Affinity Diagram Article
7	10/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group question discussion - Lecture - Group Work 	Reading question in by 10/13 Lichaw - Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5
8	10/23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group question discussion - Lecture - MVP, Prototyping Tools - Group Work on Prototype 	Reading question in by 10/20 Lichaw - Ch. 6, 7, and 8 (done)
9	10/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group question discussion - Lecture - Presentations - Group Work 	Reading question in by 10/27 Goodman - Ch. 17, and 18 Tullis - Ch. 1, 2, and 3

Schedule:

CLASS	DATE	TOPICS	COME PREPARED TO DISCUSS
10	11/6	- Group question discussion - Work on Presentations	Reading question in by 11/3 Tullis - Ch. 4, 5, and 6
11	11/13	- Presentations Due - Client Kickoff Meeting	Presentations due in Canvas by 11/10
12	11/20	- Group question discussion - Biometric (IX Lab) - Tour - Group Work on Test Plan	Reading question in by 11/17 Sharon - Ch. 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 (done) Journal Article
13	11/27	- Present/Critique Test Plan - Group questions discussion - Lecture	Test Plan due in Canvas 11/24 Reading question in by 11/24 Goodman - Ch. 13, 14, and 15 (done)
14	12/4	- Group question discussion - Lecture - Group Work	Reading question in by 12/1 Tullis - Ch. 7, 8, and 9 Journal Article
15	12/11	Final Presentations	Presentations due in Canvas by 12/8