

Communication 8970: Human-Computer Interaction

Fall 2016

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Class Information: Tues/Thurs 3:55-5:15, Derby 3116

Course Description: This course is one of two seminars offered as part of the communication technology focus area of the School of Communication graduate program. The focus of this course is on experiences with technology, including technological adoption and use; affordances across digital platforms; usability; and elements of interface design and their psychological, interpersonal, social, and cultural implications.

Course Objectives:

1. To explain the concepts and theories behind HCI research and their relevance to communication
2. To identify and elaborate elements of HCI design and their effects on users
3. To critically evaluate and synthesize interdisciplinary HCI research
4. To develop study ideas based on HCI theory and research

Required text:

American Psychological Association (2010). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

All other readings can be found on Carmen.

Recommended:

Strunk, W., & White, E. B. (2000). *The elements of style* (4th ed.). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon. (Or any later edition)

Assignments

Study journal. (5%) After reading an article, you should be left with as many questions as you found answers. As a researcher, it is essential to get into the habit of collecting your ideas, even if you don't have time to develop them into actual studies just yet. Your journal doesn't have to be neat or have a Hello Kitty cover or anything like that—it is for your benefit. Simply reference the article or topic at the top and sketch out approximately 1 page of your lingering questions, hypotheses, and/or future study ideas. The goal is to develop a collection of the kernels of executable studies. You don't have to do this for every topic, but you should do this for at least 10 dates/classes. Be sure that for these 10 dates, it is clear what you are deriving from the associated readings and concepts. *Midterm journal check* (at least 5 entries): **Tuesday, October 18.** *Journal due:* **Tuesday, December 6.**

Midterm exam. (20%) This exam will be an in-class, closed-book, short essay exam. The purpose of this format is twofold: first, to prepare you for the demands of your comprehensive exams; second, it is designed to prepare you for the demands of teaching and presenting your work. Although we are in an era of having information at our fingertips, you should have the ability to clearly, accurately, and spontaneously answer questions without having to consult other sources. Midterm date: _____.

Usability testing. (15%) At some point this semester, we will engage in some hands-on activities for you to get experience with evaluating the usability of computer interfaces. With your collaborator/s, you will produce a brief usability report and recommendation based on your testing (4-5 pages). The timing of this project is pending.

Research project. (40%) Your final project for the course will be either a) a literature review and conceptual or theoretical synthesis of an HCI topic, or b) an executable research proposal (introduction, literature review with hypotheses, method, limitations, and appendices with all items and stimuli) and accompanying IRB. The goal of either of these projects is to dig very deeply into a topic to broaden your knowledge base and also to yield what I hope will be a publishable paper.

Your project needs to be an original idea. I will not accept proposals that align too closely with your existing body of work. If you have written several papers on topic X, don't propose a literature review on topic X. Use this opportunity to explore something that interests you that you have not had the time or license to delve into yet.

The end product will be a journal-worthy paper. "Journal-worthy" means your paper should not only be well-written and insightful, but also professional in its presentation: clean 6th edition APA formatting and style; references and in-text citations cross-checked and appropriately formatted; and paper free of grammatical and typographical errors. Failure to follow directions and other sloppiness will result in considerable points taken off of your grade to reflect the potential consequences of unprofessional work in academia (e.g., rejected manuscripts, failed conference submissions, and a reputation among colleagues for being careless.)

All measures should be submitted as appendices. The paper should be approximately 14-16 pages without references or appendices.

- *Topic approval:* You must meet with me before **October 20** to get preliminary approval on your topic.
- *Initial proposal:* Your initial proposal will include 2-3 pages (plus any references). In a synthesis paper, this would outline the scope of your literature review, argue for its need, and elaborate your goals. For a research proposal, this should include basic theoretical argumentation, rationale, and preliminary hypotheses. You will submit a hard copy of your proposal in class on **Tuesday, October 25**.
- *Paper progress check-in:* You are expected to make progress on your paper throughout the semester. At this point, I will request to see evidence of your literature review (draft) and reference gathering. Check-in : _____.
- *Final paper due:* **Friday, December 9 by 3 pm.** You must submit a copy via Carmen AND a hard copy or you will be penalized.

Class participation and discussion questions. (20%) On three occasions, you will be responsible for submitting two discussion questions no later than midnight Friday for the subsequent week's topics. You will be graded for the relevance, thoughtfulness, and timeliness of your questions. Active and thoughtful class participation will account for the remaining part of your grade. Active doesn't mean nodding, breathing, and/or not falling asleep; it means making meaningful and relevant contributions to the discussion, asking challenging or interesting questions, knowing when to listen, and being a supportive participant *every* class.

Policies & Legalese

Academic Integrity: I take academic dishonesty very seriously. All students are subject to the student code of conduct (see http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp), including the student code of academic integrity.

One important consideration for graduate students is the fine line between re-using segments of one's work and re-submitting one's work. When you are writing multiple papers on the same topic across courses, it can be difficult to determine the difference. For this class, I want to see original ideas and original work that are relevant to the substance of the course. I do not want to see the same paper you've submitted multiple times with just a new population, a new treatment, or a few different variables to make it fit the class topic. Any and all segments of work that has been submitted previously or concurrently (whether in another course, a conference paper, a journal submission, or any other format) must be clearly indicated if included or heavily paraphrased in any materials submitted for this course. Failure to do so will be considered academic dishonesty and will have severe repercussions, such as a zero on the assignment.

Disruptions: Disruptions and distractions (including talking during lecture; text messaging or other phone use; or nonclass computer activity), threatening behavior, and negative participation (e.g., use of inappropriate language or derogatory speech) will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in such behavior may be asked to leave class, suffer grade penalties, and be reported to the Dean of Students and/or University Police. Cell phones are considered a disruption. **Turn your cell phone and other devices off completely and put them away before the start of class.** Any student who is observed consulting or using their device or whose device rings, beeps, or audibly vibrates during class will suffer grade penalties (1% of the overall class grade for the first offense, 5% for the second offense, etc.) and may be asked to leave class.

Device Policy: Computers will be used for in-class activities only. Laptops, tablets, phones, wearables, and other mobile device use is otherwise prohibited. If you require a computer for notetaking due to a disability, please see the disability portion below and make an appointment with me to discuss arrangements.

Disability Accommodations: If you anticipate the need for accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, please contact the Office for Disability Services, Baker Hall, Room 098, or phone (614) 292-3307. Students with documented disabilities making requests must meet with me privately within the first three weeks of class to discuss reasonable accommodations.

Diversity Statement: The School of Communication at The Ohio State University embraces and maintains an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, experiences, and people.

Our commitment to diversity moves beyond mere tolerance to recognizing, understanding, and welcoming the contributions of diverse groups and the value group members possess as individuals. In our School, the faculty, students, and staff are dedicated to building a tradition of diversity with principles of equal opportunity, personal respect, and the intellectual interests of those who comprise diverse cultures.

Title IX Statement: Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories. If you or someone you know has been sexually harassed or assaulted, subject to domestic or dating violence, or stalked or otherwise threatened, you may find the appropriate resources at <http://titleix.osu.edu> or by contacting the Ohio State Title IX Coordinator, Kellie Brennan, at titleix@osu.edu . Information about confidential counseling through the Counseling and Consultation Service can be found at <http://www.ccs.osu.edu/> or (614) 292-5766.

My Expectations: I expect that as a graduate student, you come to class prepared every day. I expect you to have the time management, research, and writing skills to ensure your success in a graduate level course. Graduate coursework is not merely a series of hoops to jump through; every class represents a body of knowledge you have not yet mastered. Regardless of its relevance to your specific interests, coursework is your opportunity to become a well-read, well-rounded, and wise scholar. Readings and other assignments should be completed before class, and you should have spent sufficient time reading, annotating, rereading, pondering, digging, or otherwise immersing yourself in the material. Your written work should reflect this depth of thought as well as the professionalism expected of someone who is not merely a student, but a scholar in the early stages of your career.

This syllabus is an agreement between the instructor and the student. The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus as deemed necessary. By staying enrolled in this class, the student agrees to abide by the policies described herein.