IFSM 629 Human Factors in Information Systems Spring 2002

Important Information

Meets: Tuesday, 4:30-7:00pm, in Academic IV, room 015

Professor: Dr. Wayne Lutters
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Office Hours: Tuesdays 7:00-8:00pm, on-line, and by appointment

Website: http://blackboard.umbc.edu/

Text: Dix, Alan, Janet Finlay, Gregory Abowd and Russell Beale. (1998). *Human-Computer Interaction* (second edition), New York: Prentice Hall.

Supplement: The ACM digital library of CHI proceedings (http://www.acm.org/dl)

Course Policies

OFFICE HOURS

Students are encouraged to take advantage of office hours. While I have arranged my official hours to best support the evening class sessions, I can usually meet at many other times of the week. (Please request an appointment via e-mail to ensure that I will be available.)

Students are welcome to raise any issues dealing with the course or their studies, however, as a policy I do not reiterate lecture material from classes which you have missed. It is best to download the lecture slides and check with your fellow classmates to cover absences.

CLASSROOM CONDUCT

Regular attendance is expected, but not required. Do note, however, that active participation in class discussion and the research panels is a sizeable portion of your final course grade.

If arriving late to class, please be courteous to your fellow students and instructor. Disruptive behavior cannot be tolerated. This also includes cell phones and pagers, which must be turned off for the duration of the class.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty and integrity. Acts of academic misconduct, as defined below, will result in disciplinary action that may include failure of the course, suspension, or dismissal. (Please consult the UMBC Student Handbook for the full policy.)

- **Cheating:** Knowingly using or attempting to use unauthorized material, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.

- **Fabrication:** Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.

- **Facilitation:** Knowingly helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty.

- **Plagiarism:** Knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise, including works of art and computer-generated information/images.

Grading Policies

GRADING STANDARDS

The University's Graduate Catalog states that grades of "A", "B", and "C" are passing and grades of "D" and "F" indicate failure. There is specifically no mention of any numerical scores associated with these letter grades. Consequently, there are no pre-defined numerical boundaries that determine final letter grades. These boundaries can only be defined at the end of the semester after all scores have been earned. At that point, boundaries for final letter grades can be defined such that they conform to the University's and IFSM's official guidelines. This means that it is not appropriate to assume that a given numerical score corresponds to a particular letter grade. It is also important to understand that final letter grades reflect academic achievement and not effort.

GRADING DETAILS

Your course grade will depend upon your performance in writing précis of two research papers, presenting those papers and co-leading discussion in the research panel, successful performance with class exercises and quizzes, active participation in discussion, and completing a quality usability assessment plan paper.

There are 100 possible points to be earned in the course, with approximate percentage breakdowns as follows: (specific point values for each assignment will be announced and listed in the Blackboard grade book.)

Assignment	%
• Research panel [2x] - Précis - Presentation & discussion	30%
• Usability assessment plan	30%
• Exercises	25%
• Class participation	15%

LATE WORK

Assignments are due at the beginning of class or as indicated. Late assignments will not be accepted.

OIT instructions for registering for the IFSM 629 Blackboard 5 course website:

1.) Go to http://blackboard.umbc.edu
2.) When you press the "login" button, you will receive a UMBC "WebAuth" login prompt. Simply use your usual UMBC "kerberos" userid & password. You will then be redirected to your course or to the MyBlackboard screen that lists your available courses.
3.) If you have not enrolled in the online course before, click on the "course" button. Then click on "Browse Course Catalog".
4.) Type in a keyword for your course in the text box. For example, if you are taking an English course, type in ENGL. Click on "Go".
5.) Find your course site and click on the "Enroll" button on the far right side of the window. Click on "Submit", and "OK", when prompted to do so.

Course Assignments

WEEKLY RESEARCH PANEL
Every student is expected to prepare **two** different topics during the course. Preparation for the research panel includes the following activities:

1.) Select an appropriate research article (published within the last three years)
2.) Clear it with the instructor
3.) Read and critique the article
4.) Write a précis (detailed below and demonstrated in class)
5.) E-mail your précis to the instructor by Friday who will post it on Blackboard
6.) Read the other posted précis
7.) Briefly present your article in class (knowing that all students have read your précis)
8.) Co-lead the class discussion surrounding this research topic

Précis: The précis is a tight summary of your research article. It should consist of three sections, with a combined maximum limit of 500 words. (The word count is important. Brevity in writing is not an easy skill to master.)

- Summary: *What is the central argument of this article? What are the key details of the study? What are the important findings/results? Why does it matter?* [up to 300 words]
- Strengths: *What are the critical strengths of this study?* [up to 100 words]
- Limitations: *What are the important limitations/biases/omissions of this study?* [up to 100 words]

USABILITY ASSESSMENT PLAN
The final integrative assignment for this course is for each student to write a usability assessment plan. The following general activities are part of this process:

1.) Identify a real-world usability problem in an area of personal interest
2.) Research the problem in the literature
3.) Design an appropriate evaluation plan using relevant methodologies and models
4.) Concretize the evaluation plan into a detailed action plan

While the paper will be due during finals week, there will be an initial review by the instructor two weeks prior. Additional details on this assignment will be provided later in the semester.

EXERCISES
During the course of the semester there will be a number of small exercises, both in-class and take home, and brief comprehension quizzes, which will be evaluated.

CLASS PARTICIPATION
Every student is expected to have completed the assigned reading (textbook, supplemental, and weekly research summaries) prior to class and participate in class discussion. Contributions to the weekly research panel discussions are especially noted.

Tentative Schedule

Following is a tentative schedule of lecture topics, readings, research panel topics and assignment due dates. The instructor reserves the right to adjust this schedule for any reason, given fair advanced notice both in class and on the Blackboard announcements page. In addition, the most current schedule will always be available under "Course Information." Please check Blackboard frequently to ensure that your information is up-to-date.

Date	Lecture Topic	CH	Research Panel	Assignments Due
1/29	Course introduction, overview of HCI			
2/5	Understanding the human	1	Innovative I/O	• Activate blackboard account
2/12	Understanding the computer	2	Innovative I/O	
2/19	Understanding the interaction	3, 4	Haptic I/O & tangible media	
2/26	User models	6	Biometrics, biofeedback, eye tracking	
3/5	Task analysis	7	Speech recognition	
3/12	Interaction & system models	8,9	Handwriting/gesture recognition	
3/19	Usability assessment: In the field	11	Virtual reality, immersive environments	
3/26	**No class** *(Spring Break)*			
4/2	Usability assessment: In the lab	11	Wearable computing, augmented reality	• Field evaluation
4/9	User assistance	12	Accessibility	
4/16	Integrating usability into the design lifecycle	5,10	Agents, critics, & recommenders	
4/23 CHI	Design case: HCI & the web	16	Multimedia	
4/30	Computer-mediated Communication (CMC)	13,14	CMC	
5/7	Computer-supported Cooperative Work (CSCW)	13,14	CSCW	• Evaluation paper (preliminary review)
5/14	Ubiquitous Computing	15	UbiComp & mobile systems	
	No final exam			• Evaluation paper (5/17)