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User Interface Design – IS 403 Fall 2013

Instructor: Dr. Shaun Kane
Email: skane@umbc.edu
Course web page: http://userpages.umbc.edu/~skane/classes/is403/
Office hours: Thursday 1:30-2pm, ITE 431, or by appointment
Meeting time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:30-3:45pm, MATH 104

Course Description

A second semester human-centered computing course in which the student will have the opportunity to apply the user interface theories, guidelines and principles presented in IS 303. The goal of the course is for the student to follow the complete systems development life cycle in analyzing, designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating an interactive user interface. Course activities include producing project milestone deliverables, developing a design report, coding an interactive interface and conducting a formal interface evaluation.

Textbook and Materials

Required

1. UMBC email ID (Please do not use any other email for class correspondence)
2. UMBC Blackboard ID
3. 8 x 10 (or similar sized) plain paper or notebook*; bring to every class*
4. At least 3 colors of pen/pencil/marker*; bring to every class*

Optional

5. Marty Stepp, Jessica Miller, and Victoria Kirst. Web Programming Step by Step, ISBN: 978-0-578-01239-1.
6. Steve Krug. Don't Make Me Think! A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability, 2nd Edition, New Riders, 2005, ISBN: 978-0321344755.
7. Robin Williams. The Non-Designer's Design Book, 3rd Edition, Peachpit Press, 2008, ISBN: 978-0321534040.

Prerequisites

Required course: IS 303 (Human Factors in Computer Systems Design)

Course Outcomes

When this course is completed, the student will be able to:

1. Identify design elements from analysis of existing interfaces
2. Use several of the important concepts for interface design (i.e. color and typography) in their designs
3. Prototype an interface using both low and high fidelity techniques
4. Evaluate interface designs
5. Perform a multi-step, iterative design process

Instructional Methods

Discussion, lectures, in-class lab activities, homework, and in-class design critiques.

Instructor's Expectations

Satisfactory completion of this course requires meeting the following expectations. Students who are unable to meet these expectations will not receive a passing grade in this course. If you have questions about these expectations, please contact the instructor.

Class attendance: Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students. Students should notify the instructor in advance if they are unable to attend class, or will be arriving late. It is the student's responsibility to confer with the instructor about the absence and missed course work. If you are unable to attend class, on time, on a regular basis, you should not sign up for this course section.

Class participation: Attending class meetings, and participating in class activities (discussions, student presentations, and lab exercises) are an important part of the course. Students are expected to participate in these activities. Cell phones and other communication devices are to be turned off during class. Students who disrupt the class through talking or using distracting technology will immediately be asked to leave, and will be required to make up any activities that take place after they are dismissed.

Professional-quality work: It is expected that all submitted work will be professionally accomplished and presented. All submitted should be neatly written, stapled, etc., at the level that you would submit for your job or a job application. Assignments that do not meet these criteria will not be accepted; resubmission will be at the instructor's discretion.

Respect for others: It is impossible to discuss design without discussing issues of cultural differences or personal preferences. It is OK to disagree with another student's opinion, but we will not engage in personal attacks or criticisms. Students who make disrespectful comments to others in the classroom, or otherwise behave disrespectfully (e.g. talking during a student's presentation), will be asked to leave for the remainder of the class session.

Check the course web site: News and important updates will be posted on the course web site (http://userpages.umbc.edu/~skane/classes/is403/). Students are expected to check the course web site before every class meeting for any announcements.

Grading

Expectation of work: Each credit hour is considered equivalent to one hour of in-class time, and two hours of work outside of class. Thus, for a three-credit course, it is expected that you will spend at least **six** hours per week working outside of class.

Letter grades: With respect to final letter grades, the University's Undergraduate Catalogue states that:

A: Indicates superior achievement
B: Good performance
C: Adequate performance
D: Minimal performance
F: Failure

There is specifically no mention of any numerical scores associated with these letter grades. Consequently, there are no pre-defined numerical demarcations that determine final letter grades; these can be defined only at the end of the semester when all accumulated points are tallied and compared.

Grading breakdown: Your grade in this course will be based on the following components:

- *Project assignments (10 projects, 40% of final grade):* There will be approximately 10 homework assignments throughout the semester – each may be completed within 1 to 2 weeks. Some projects are cumulative, and build on earlier assignments. These assignments will generally be graded on a letter scale (A,B,C,D,F) using a rubric.
- *Quizzes (3 quizzes, 20%):* There will be 3 in-class quizzes, covering each of the major course topics. Quizzes will be presented in class; you will have 30 minutes to complete each quiz.
- *In-class lab activities (approximately 10, 30%):* We will conduct a number of design activities in class. These activities will be graded check plus, check, or check minus, and will need to be made up if you miss class.
- *Class participation (10%):* Students will be expected to contribute actively to the class. At the end of the semester, students will submit a class participation report (linked on the web site) describing their contributions to the learning environment of this class.

Late assignments: Unless otherwise specified, assignments are due at the start of class on the specified due date (2:30:00pm). Any assignment delivered after the specified due date will be considered late. Unless otherwise specified, late assignments will be accepted for up to one week after the original due date, for **50% credit.** After one week, late assignments will not be accepted.

Grading philosophy: When possible, I try to provide clear grading guidelines for each assignment. However, as this class involves design, writing, and other creative activities, it is not always possible to specify how every point will be assigned. An assignment may meet all points of the assignment description, but not receive a perfect score. As noted in the section “Letter grades”, assignments that simply “check all the boxes” will typically receive a B. Grades of A are reserved for assignments that complete the requirements but are also **good** – i.e., well written, thoughtful, and professionally presented. I encourage you to solicit feedback on your work-in-progress from friends, family, and peers, and via the Blackboard discussion board.

Re-grading: If you feel that an assignment was incorrectly graded, please come to office hours with the assignment and a written list of any mistakes made during grading, and the assignment will be reevaluated.

Resubmission: If you are unhappy with a grade that you receive on an assignment, you may be able to resubmit the assignment for an improved grade. If you are interested in resubmitting, please contact the instructor within 48 hours of receiving your original grade. You will be asked to provide a plan for how you will improve the assignment, and will have one week to complete the resubmission. The opportunity to resubmit an assignment will be at the instructor’s discretion. Except in unusual circumstances, no more than one resubmission will be permitted.

Extra credit: For students who are interested, there may be a few opportunities to earn **extra credit** in this course. These additional assignments and activities will be designed to be fun, and give students a

different perspective on the material outside of what we do in class. Details about these extra credit opportunities will be announced in class and on the class web site.

Other Useful Information

- **Sending me email:** Except when traveling, I make an effort to respond to email within 24 hours. However, I do not always check email throughout the day. I am most likely to check email for this class in the morning (8am - 10am) and late afternoon (4pm-6pm).
- **Add/Drop:** Add/Drop day this semester is Wednesday, September 11th.

Academic Integrity

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. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty and they are wrong. Academic misconduct will result in disciplinary action that may include failure of the course, suspension or dismissal. Acts of Academic Misconduct are defined as the following:

- **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.
- **Facilitating Academic Dishonesty:** Intentionally or 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 or art and computer-generated information/images.

To read the full policy on academic integrity, consult the UMBC web site
http://www.umbc.edu/undergrad_ed/ai/

Student Accommodations

UMBC is committed to eliminating discriminatory obstacles that disadvantage students based on disability. Student Support Services (http://www.umbc.edu/sss/) is the UMBC department designated to receive and maintain confidential files of disability-related documentation, certify eligibility for services, determine reasonable accommodations, develop with each student plans for the provision of such accommodations, and serve as a liaison between faculty members and students regarding disability-related issues. If you have a disability and want to request accommodations, contact SSS in the Math/Psych Bldg., room 213 or at 410-455-2459. SSS will require you to provide appropriate documentation of disability. If you require accommodations for this class, make an appointment to meet with me to discuss your SSS-approved accommodations.

Right to Revise

The instructor reserves the right to revise this syllabus during the semester in response to student feedback, schedule changes, or other issues. Any changes to the syllabus will be announced in class. If any changes to the syllabus that affect a student's final grade are made, that student will have the option of choosing the original or revised grading criteria.