

Note: This syllabus may represent a past offering of this course and future course offerings may differ.

HCDE 417: Usability Research Techniques

Instructor: Andrew Davidson
Quarter/Year: Autumn 2012
Course Schedule: Tuesdays & Thursdays; 1:30-3:20PM

Course Description

Introduces usability research methods used in the product-development process; contextual inquiry, surveys and interviews, focus groups, user profiling, usability testing, cognitive walkthroughs, heuristics, and others.

Course Objectives

- Understand and explain to others what usability testing and usability research are and what they can contribute to a design effort
- Analyze the usability issues that a product has and prioritize those that merit investigation through a usability test; analyze the various audiences for the product and prioritize those that are most critical at the current moment
- Design a usability test that answers the questions you have for the audiences of interest
- Administer the test, analyze the results, and report the findings effectively

Grading and Assignments

Grade Components: The chart below indicates the distribution (relative weight) of each component of the various class assignments and activities in your overall grade in the course. Below that are details about each of the assignment components.

Component *	Percentage
Class Participation	5%
Reading Reflections	10%
Technology Demonstration	10%
User Study Presentation (3%) Report (12%)	15%

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Test Plan / Kit Plan Draft (2%) Kit Draft (2%) Report (11%)	15%
Usability Test Project Draft Report (5%) Presentation (5%) Final Report (25%)	35%
Final Reflection	10%
TOTAL	100%

* Students must complete all assignments to earn a passing grade in the course.

Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Class
1	Introduction, Overview	Syllabus review Introductions User-Centered Design Requirements
2	Ways of Thinking About Products and Users	Products and Users Tech Tool Assignment Groups IA Card Sort Proposals
3	Methods and Their Relationships – 1	Preparing for User Requirements Activity Tech Tool Demo 1 Usability Project Research Tech Tool Demo 2 Usability Project Pitches
4	Methods and Their Relationships – 2	Tech Tool Demo 3 Usability Project Groups Tech Tool Demo 4
5	User Studies	Tech Tool Demo 5 Tech Tool Demo 6
6	Test Plans and Kits - 1	
7	Test Plans and Kits - 2	
8	Data Gathering	Team Consultations
9	Data Gathering	Team Consultations

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10	Report Workshops	Report Workshops
11	Project Presentations	Final Presentations – 1 Final Presentations – 2
Finals	Final Thoughts	Project Reflection