Course Syllabus

MMIS 680 Human-Computer Interaction (3 credits)


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Class Location and Format: Online
Course Internet address: http://scis.nova.edu/nova/hci/top.html
In text form from the scis system: type hci at your system prompt

Course Description:
The dynamics of human-computer interaction (HCI). Provides a broad overview and offers specific background relating to user-centered design approaches in information systems applications. Areas to be addressed include the user interface and software design strategies, user experience levels, interaction styles, usability engineering, and collaborative systems technology. Students will perform formal software evaluations and usability tests.

Required Textbooks:
Note to the student: If you have severe difficulty getting this text, you may select any general text on usability, especially any of those indicated with a * in the bibliography section of this syllabus. (Jordan or Nielsen or Rubin, for example). There are many usability texts that will suffice for this course.
3. Selected ACM articles. See Reading Schedule in the Course Guide. ACM articles can be accessed online through the NSU Electronic Library, the ACM Digital Library Database.

See the Course Schedule for specific reading assignments throughout the term.
Course Objectives:
Upon completion of this course and project, the student will:
1. Gain insight into the field of human-computer interaction.
2. Understand how software design practices and methods can be integrated with human factors principles and methods now being employed.
3. Gain a conceptual foundation for user interface design, including design goals, models of user knowledge, interaction styles, design guidelines, and assessment of user interface design.
4. Understand the nature of the HCI design process. Apply an integrated perspective to the design process.
5. Understand the difficulties and pitfalls of translating theory and principles derived from research findings, into practical advice on system design.
6. Apply metaphorical reasoning and conceptual models to user interface design.
7. Make decisions about which interaction styles to use in different applications.
8. Be able to select and apply suitable techniques for collecting users’ requirements and analyzing tasks.
9. Become familiar with the major aspects of usability evaluation.
10. Be able to conduct usability analyses and evaluate software.
11. Understand how computer systems can enhance collaboration in the context of work organization.

Course Topics (summary):
Human-Computer Interaction as an emerging field
Human Information Processing
User experience levels
Interaction styles and general design
Interaction strategies
Interface metaphors and conceptual models
Screen design
Online documentation and help systems
HCI and the World Wide Web
Task analysis
Usability evaluation
Collaborative systems, groupware & coordination technology
Research in HCI

MMIS 680 HCI Course Requirements:
Course Activities: Students will conduct independent research and produce scholarly projects. In addition, students will contribute to “Student Forums,” a Web-based conferencing forum, at designated times throughout the term. Contributions will count as points toward the class participation grade. See the section on Student Forums in the addendum Course Guide for instructions on accessing and contributing to the online conference discussions.
In addition to the required asynchronous contributions in Forums, the major course requirements will consist of two assignments.
Instead of the typical midterm and final examinations, two assignments or projects are required that will enable the student to synthesize the major issues and relevant research currently being examined in the field of human-computer interaction.

Assignment #1: An objective and scholarly software evaluation paper. Due date is: Sunday, February 9, 2003.

Assignment #2: Conduct and report a usability test. Due date is: Sunday, March 16, 2003.

IMPORTANT: Specific instructions for completing these assignments are contained in the addendum Course Guide. Assignments must be submitted according to the due dates specified in this syllabus. Late assignments must be pre-approved by the professor and will likely result in point reduction. ALL ASSIGNMENTS REQUIRE OUTSIDE LITERATURE RESEARCH AND ACTIVITY. Assignments may be submitted online through the electronic student system (ESET -- Web-based system). Do not email or fax assignments.

Grading Scale and Criteria:

A ........................................ 192-200 points  
A- ........................................ 186-191 points  
B+ ........................................ 180-185 points  
B ........................................ 174-179 points  
B- ........................................ 168-173 points  
C+ ........................................ 162-167 points  
C ........................................ 156-161 points  
F ........................................ 0-155 points

Grading Criteria For the 680 course:
Assignment #1 75 points  
Assignment #2 100 points  
Class Participation 25 points

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200 points total

Class/Course Rules:
GSCIS Stated Policies:
The Graduate School of Computer and Information Sciences (GSCIS) requires that this information be disseminated to all registered students as part of each course. The policies exist to clarify the relationship of the student to the institution.

1. Standards of Academic Integrity (For complete policy, see Code of Student Conduct and
Each student is responsible for maintaining academic integrity and intellectual honesty in his or her academic work. It is the policy of the school that each student must:

- Submit his or her own work, not that of another person
- Not falsify data or records (including admissions materials)
- Not engage in cheating (e.g., giving or receiving help during examinations, acquiring and/or transmitting test questions prior to an examination)
- Not receive or give aid on assigned work that requires independent effort
- Properly credit the words or ideas of others according to accepted standards for professional publications.
- Not use term paper writing services or consult such services for the purpose of obtaining assistance in the preparation of materials to be submitted in courses or for theses or dissertations
- Not commit plagiarism (Webster’s defines plagiarism as “stealing or passing off ideas or words of another as one’s own” and “the use of a created production without crediting the source.”)

*When using the exact words of another, quotation marks must be used for short quotations (fewer than 40 words), and block quotation style must be used for longer quotations. In either case, a proper citation must also be provided. When paraphrasing (summarizing, rewriting, or rearranging) the words or ideas of another, a proper citation must be provided. The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Fifth Edition, contains standards and examples on quotation methods (pages 117 and 292) and on citation methods (pp. 207–214). (Addendum by this professor: overuse in direct quotes will not be allowed in papers for this course. Direct quotes should be used only sparingly, if only necessary. It is better to paraphrase and properly cite the work instead.)

Extreme caution must be exercised by students involved in collaborative work to avoid violation of this policy.


2. Writing Skills

Each student must demonstrate proficiency in the use of the English language in all work submitted for this course. Grammatical errors, spelling errors, and writing that does not express ideas clearly will affect your grade. The professor will not provide remedial help concerning writing problems.
that you might have. Students who are unable to write correctly and clearly are urged to contact their program office for sources of remedial help.

3. Communication by Email

Students must use their NSU email accounts when sending email to faculty and staff and must clearly identify their names and other appropriate information, e.g., course or program. When communicating with students via email, faculty and staff members will send mail only to NSU email accounts using NSU-recognized usernames. Students who forward their NSU-generated email to other email accounts do so at their own risk. SCIS uses various course management tools that use private internal email systems. Students enrolled in courses using these tools should check both the private internal email system and NSU’s regular email system. NSU offers students Web-based email access. Students are encouraged to check their NSU email account daily.

4. The Temporary Grade of Incomplete (I)

GSCIS Stated Policy: The temporary grade of Incomplete (I) will be granted only in cases of extreme hardship. Students do not have a right to an incomplete, which may be granted only when there is evidence of just cause. A student desiring an incomplete must submit a written appeal to the course professor at least two weeks prior to the end of the term. In the appeal, the student must: (1) provide a rationale; (2) demonstrate that he/she has been making a sincere effort to complete the assignments during the term; and (3) explain how all the possibilities to complete the assignments on time have been exhausted. Should the course professor agree, an incomplete contract will be prepared by the student and signed by both student and professor. The incomplete contract must contain a description of the work to be completed and a timetable. The completion period should be the shortest possible. In no case may the completion date extend beyond 30 days from the last day of the term for master’s courses or beyond 60 days from the last day of the term for doctoral courses. The incomplete contract will accompany the submission of the professor’s final grade roster to the program office. The program office will monitor each incomplete contract. If a change-of-grade form is not submitted by the scheduled completion date, the grade will be changed automatically from I to F. No student may graduate with an I on his or her record. The grade of I does not apply to master’s thesis or doctoral dissertation registrations.

Addendum by the professor: Incompletes will not be granted for MMIS 680.

5. Grade Policy Regarding Withdrawals

Course withdrawal requests must be submitted to the student’s program office in writing (via postal mail or email) by the student. Requests for withdrawal must be received by the program office at least three weeks prior to the last day of the term. Program offices will publish specific withdrawal deadline dates for each term (see Academic Calendar on page ii of the catalog). Withdrawals sent by email must be sent from the student's assigned NSU email account. Requests for withdrawal received after 11:59 p.m. est on the withdrawal deadline date will not be accepted. Failure to attend classes or participate in course activities will not automatically drop or withdraw a student from the class or the university. Students who have not withdrawn by the withdrawal deadline will receive letter grades
that reflect their performance in the course(s). When a withdrawal request is approved, the transcript will show a grade of W (Withdrawn) for the course. Students with a history of withdrawals risk dismissal. Depending on the date of withdrawal, the student may be eligible for a partial refund. For a complete list of withdrawal deadline dates, please see the academic calendars located at: http://www.scis.nova.edu/NSS/pdf_documents/AcadCal.pdf

6. Miscellaneous rules: (1) A student may neither do additional work nor repeat work to raise their grade. (2) Literature research is required for all work in this course. (3) Adhere to all deadlines – late arrivals will likely result in point reduction. (4) To receive full class participation points, every student must make steady contributions to the Forums in order to keep a healthy communication going throughout the term. (5) There will be no incompletes given for MMIS 680.

Prepared by Laurie P. Dringus, Ph.D.

Bibliography and Suggested Texts:

* Recommended texts on usability evaluation and testing

Note to the student: It is highly suggested that you investigate these sources as reference materials for your assignment/project work. Also, master’s students may refer to the Reading Assignments Addendum list for articles to be used as reference materials.

In addition, it is highly suggested that you visit the ACM SIGCHI Web site, publications page, for other available journals and conference proceedings. Some journals and proceedings are available full-text online. Check it out: www.acm.org/sigchi/publications/


Course Schedule (See also the Reading Assignments—Selected ACM Articles Addendum in the Course Guide):

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic/Activity</th>
<th>Tasks/Reading</th>
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| 1    | Introduction to Human-Computer Interaction and Interaction Design; Usability Concepts | Preece: Ch. 1, 6  
Dumas: Ch. 1,4  
Read article |
| 2    | SIGCHI resources; Understanding interaction; Usability concepts | Visit HCI Exploration Links (available online on the HCI Online Web Site  
Preece: Ch. 2  
Dumas: Ch. 3,5 |
| 3    | Understanding Users; Human Aspects of HCI  
Student Forums/HCI Discussion Groups start online and continue throughout the term | Preece: Ch. 3,5  
Read article |
| 4    | Intro to Usability Eval & Testing | Preece: Ch. 10, 11  
Dumas: Ch. 2, 7, 8  
Read articles |
| 5    | HCI and the Web; User-Centered Approaches to Design  
Assignment #1 Due on or before Feb. 9, 2003 | Preece: Ch. 9  
Read article |
| 6    | User Requirements; Conceptual Design | Preece: Ch. 7, 8  
Dumas: Ch. 11, 13  
Read articles |
| 7    | Observing Users; Usability Methods | Preece: Ch. 12, 13  
Dumas: Ch. 9, 10 |
| 8    | Usability Test Planning | Dumas: Ch. 12, 14, 15, 16 |
| 9    | Testing and Modeling Users | Preece: Ch. 14  
Dumas: Ch. 18, 19 |
| 10   | Making A Difference: Recommending Changes | Dumas: Ch. 6, 21  
Read article |
| 11   | Computer Supported Cooperative Work  
Assignment #2 Due on or before March 16, 2003 | Preece: Ch. 4 |
| 12   | The Future of HCI (wrap up) | no specific readings |

Note: This reading schedule is only a guide to help you read the texts. You may read ahead or read several chapters concurrently. Our online discussions will include many themes, but may not necessarily follow the order of the reading schedule. Also, note there are lecture notes online pertaining to many of these topics. The lecture notes are available in text format from the HCI Web Site, under the “Learning Connections” link.