

City University of Hong Kong

**Information on a Course
offered by School of Creative Media
with effect from Semester A in 2010 / 2011**

This form is for completion by the Course Co-ordinator. The information provided on this form will be deemed to be the official record of the details of the course. It has multipurpose use: for the University's database, and for publishing in various University publications including the Blackboard, and documents for students and others as necessary.

Please refer to the Explanatory Notes attached to this Form on the various items of information required.

Part I

Course Title: User Research

Course Code: SM2264

Course Duration: One semester

No. of Credit Units: 3

Level: A2/B3

Medium of Instruction: English

Prerequisites: (Course Code and Title) SM1204 Fundamentals of Programming I

Precursors: (Course Code and Title) NA

Equivalent Courses: (Course Code and Title) NA

Exclusive Courses: (Course Code and Title) NA

Part II

1. Course Aims:

This course aims at combining analytical thinking of users' needs and experiences and creative insight by creating design prototype. Upon completion of the class, students will understand the importance of understanding users' needs in design process, and translating their user data into design decisions.

Class activities will be designed to address the following:

- 1) To encourage the students to look into their daily experiences of human-computer interaction.
- 2) To develop students' interest in user-based design and assessment.
- 3) To identify and describe user needs and requirements by applying different user research methods such as observation, interview, focus groups, and participatory analysis.
- 4) To bring user needs and data into the design process.
- 5) To create design prototype.

Since this course is designed for students interested in media and interface design, the practice-based discussion will revolve around the use of popular cultural artifacts such as capsule toys vendors, karaoke, sticker photo machine, MP3 player, mobile phone, on-line chats, internet shopping, computer games.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No.	CILOs	Weighing (if applicable)
1.	Identify user profile and product characteristics	
2.	Identify and apply different methods of doing empirical user research: observation, interview, focus group, card sorting, questionnaire, participatory ethnography	
3.	Gather information and analyze users' needs and wants	
4.	Create their own dossier of case studies for (1 – 3)	
5.	Create portfolio with design prototype based on goals, user needs and context (1 – 4)	

3. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs)

Indicative of likely activities and tasks students will undertake to learn in this course. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course.

ILO No	TLAs	Hours/weeks (if applicable)
CILO 1	Lecture + workshop on understanding user profile, developing user persona & scenario, and product characteristics	1 week
CILO 2	Lecture + workshop on different user research methods	6 weeks
	Field trip	1 week
CILO 3	Instructor's overview + students' presentation + class discussion	2 weeks
CILO 4	Instructor's overview + workshop on writing user research report & creating paper prototype	1 week
CILO 4	Log-book with user data	
CILO 5	Students' presentation + class discussion on design decisions & prototype	1 week

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities

(designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs)

Indicative of likely activities and tasks students will undertake to learn in this course. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course.

ILO No	Type of assessment tasks/activities	Weighting (if applicable)	Remarks
CILO 1	Student presentation + short written report on their selected products' user profile and products' characteristics	10%	
CILO 2	4 in-class exercises (each 5 %) on different user research methods	20%	
CILO 2 – 4	Student presentation + written review on focus group interview & field trip	15%	
CILO 2 – 4	Student presentation + short written report on their research progress (with refined user & product characteristics, research method, user data)	15%	
CILO 4	Log book with user data	10%	
CILO 5	Portfolio (user research report + design prototype) & presentation on final design.	30%	

5. Grading of Student Achievement:

Refer to Grading of Courses in the Academic Regulations and to the Explanatory Notes.

100 % coursework

Grading Pattern: Standard (A+, A, A-...F)

Part III

Keyword Syllabus:

User-centered design, user interfaces design, human-computer interaction, qualitative research, research methodology, ethnography, auto-ethnography, field studies, interviews, focus groups, participant observation, thick description, usability assessment, wants and needs analysis, data analysis, data interpretation

Recommended Reading:

Text(s):

Catherine Courage and Kathy Baxter. *Understanding your users: a practical guide to user requirements: methods, tools, and techniques*, Morgan Kaufmann Publishers: San Francisco, CA, 2005.

David R. Millen. *Rapid ethnography: time deepening strategies for HCI field research*. Conference proceedings on Designing interactive systems : processes, practices, methods, and techniques: processes, practices, methods, and techniques. ACM, 2000.

Robert S. Weiss, *Learning from Strangers - The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies*, New York: The Free Press, 1994.

David L. Morgan, "Conducting and Analyzing Focus Groups", in *Focus Groups as Qualitative Research*, Sage, 1988, pp. 53-71.

Richard A. Krueger, "Asking questions in a focus group," in *Focus groups : a practical guide for applied research*, 1994, pp. 53-69.

Blomberg, J., Burrell, M., Guest, G. "An ethnographic approach to design", in Jacko J. A., Sears A. (eds.). *The Human-Computer Interaction Handbook: Fundamentals, Evolving Technologies and Emerging Applications*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.: Mahwah, New Jersey, 2003.

Pruitt, John and Grudin, Jonathan. *Personas: Practice and Theory*. 2002.

Kentaro Go and John M. Carroll, "The Blind Men and the Elephant: Views of Scenario-Based System Design", *Interactions*, Nov.-Dec. 2004

Alan Cooper. *The inmates are running the asylum*, Indianapolis: Sams, 1999. ch 11: Designing for people.

Mike Kuniavsky, *Observing the User Experience: A Practitioner's Guide to User Research*, San Francisco, Morgan-Kaufman, 2003; chapter 11: surveys.

Allison Druin (ed.), *The design of children's technology*, San Francisco: Morgan Kaufmann Publishers, 1999.

Snyder, Carolyn, *Paper prototyping : the fast and easy way to design and refine user interfaces*, San Francisco, Calif.: Morgan Kaufmann, 2003.

Debra L. M. Dvornik, *Digital library creators and users: Evaluating intended users versus actual users*. [electronic resource], Thesis (M.L.I.S.)--San Jose State University, 2004.

Sridhar, M. S., *Library use and user research: with twenty case studies*, New Delhi : Concept Pub. Co., 2002.

Christian Lindholm, Turkka Keinonen, Harri Kiljander (eds), *Mobile usability: how Nokia changed the face of the mobile phone*, New York ; London : McGraw-Hill, 2003.

Praima Chayutsahakij. *User-centered design goal setting: The interplay between user research and innovation*. Thesis (Ph.D.)--Illinois Institute of Technology, 2002. (electronic resource)

Kelly Goto & Emily Cotler, *Web ReDesign 2.0*, Berkeley: New Riders, 2005.

JoAnn T. Hackos and Janice C.Redish. *User and Task Analysis for Interface Design*, New York: Wiley, 1998.

Hugh Beyer and Karen Holtzblatt, *Contextual Design*, San Francisco; Morgan-Kaufman, 1998

Online Resources:

IBM Ease of Use [short excerpt], “What is user-centered design?”, http://www-3.ibm.com/ibm/easy/eou_ext.nsf/publish/2

Nokia persona, <http://europe.nokia.com/mobilebusiness/americas/whitepapers.html>

UC Berkeley Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects,
<http://cphs.berkeley.edu/content/guideline.htm>

Usability for the Old and Young, <http://www.stcsig.org/usability/topics/special.html>

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