

Putting It into Practice

Students in the HCI class are required to complete a semester-long design project. Teams of three or four students observe and interview potential users (each student conducts 2 interviews), create models representing data gathered from the users, consolidate individual models to a single model, brainstorm a design idea, test a paper prototype of the design idea, and create a high fidelity prototype. The project is given to them in a high level description with very few hard specifications. The projects focus on tasks that are universal enough that a general population will have some experience to provide useful information. For example, one project focused on creating a time management system geared toward academic studies and another project focused on an application for creating academic schedules.

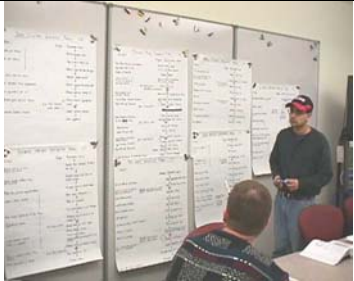

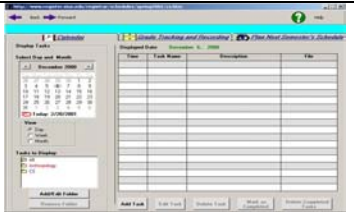
Project Milestones	
<p>Work Models</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphical representation of data • Visualization of implications of data • Team consensus of data interpretation • Seeing data across multiple users 	
<p>Paper Prototype</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interface created using paper products • User/designer partnership • Maximal feedback for minimum effort • Iterative refinement 	
<p>High-Fidelity Prototype</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refined application created using Rapid Prototyping Language • Black-box functionality for testing • User/designer partnership • Formal usability testing 	

Table 3: Project Milestones

Volunteers are solicited from introductory computer science courses to serve as potential users (See “Software Design Project” below). The volunteers receive extra credit in the introductory computer science course for participating in the project. This emulates the approach taken in psychology courses where students in beginning psychology courses are offered extra credit for their involvement in upper level courses that teach experimental methods. Each HCI student is required to interview two potential users. The interviews last between 45 to 60 minutes. A design team of three will then have data gathered from six potential users from which to model, brainstorm, and create an initial design. The team members create a paper prototype of their design and test it on three of the interviewees. This process provides team members with a way to refine the design and validate ideas.

Milestones corresponding to the steps in the Contextual Design process are set to provide students feedback during the process and to insure they are making progress on the project (See Table 3). The course follows a just-in-time teaching strategy where concepts and techniques the students will need in each milestone of the project are presented in the course just prior to when they will be using them in the project. This allows for students to be assigned the projects early in the semester, the course content they need is immediate to its use, and it helps strengthen the students understanding by having presentation followed closely by its application.

Software Design Project

Have you ever had trouble using a computer? Who hasn't!!

This is the way most computer programs get created:



But this is YOUR chance to help change the world!!

Become part of the software design team!

Participants are needed to help upper level Computer Science students design software applications. You will be able to give input as to what you would like to see in the application as well as test and help modify a prototype of the application.

To participate, you will be asked to meet with a group of software design students for about an hour, 1 or 2 times during the semester. The students will interview and video tape you as a potential user of a product they are developing and ask you to try out the program they eventually design.

EXTRA CREDIT: As compensation, your instructor will provide you with an opportunity to earn extra credit toward your grade.

To change the world all you have to do is complete this form and turn it into the Department Office or your instructor.

CS 321 Software Design Project Form

(Attention: Myra Bergman)

Contact information

Name:

Phone:

Email:

I could be available to meet with a design team (please indicate times):

	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
Saturday			
Sunday			

How many semesters have you attended SIUE? _____

Have you ever attended another university or college? _____

Return this form to the Computer Science Department Office (EB 2054) or your instructor by Wednesday, June 4th.

Your personal information and identity will be kept confidential.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

CS 321 DESIGNER'S NAME: _____

ARRANGED DATE OF INTERVIEW/TEST: _____

SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER (AFTER COMPLETION OF THE MEETING): _____