**COM EM 757**

**Developing Interactivity**

**Spring 2015**

### Instructor: Lei Guo, Ph.D.

Class Time: MW 11-12:30pm

Class Room: COM206

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Office Hours: MW 2-4pm, TTH 11am-noon or by appointment

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Course Description

A central aspect of “emerging media” is their interactivity. What exactly is interactivity?

What does interactivity do? What are the processes involved in designing an interactive media project? Is more interactivity always better?

This course introduces you to principles of interactivity and a practical experience in designing interactive work. Topics on media technology, interaction design, information architecture, animation and general html5‐based application opportunities will be covered.

Through a series of projects, you will gain experience in the research, design, production, and evaluation of a content‐rich, user‐centered interactive website. Though the course focuses on interactive web design, the knowledge and skills acquired in the class will be helpful for designing other interactive projects or services, such as mobile device applications, games, and the like.

**Course Objectives**

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

* Gain a holistic view on the design of an interactive media project
* Develop a theoretical and practical understanding of design principles
* Demonstrate competency in using appropriate tools and software to design interactive work

**Readings**

**Recommended Books**

Cooper, A., et al. (2014). About face 3: The essentials of interaction design (4th Ed). John Wiley & Sons. (Online access available via BU library)

Rogers, Y., et al. (2011). Interaction design: Beyond human-computer interaction (3rd Ed). John Wiley & Sons.

Krug, S. (2014). Don’t make me think, revisited: A common sense approach to web usability  (3rd Ed). New Riders.

Morville, P. & Rosenfeld, L. (2007). Information architecture for the World Wide Web (3rd Ed). O'Reilly & Associates.

Lidwell, W., et al. (2010). *Universal principles of design.* Rockport.

\*Additional readings will be posted on the Blackboard course site.

**Course Requirements:**

Participation (10%):

Class participation is encouraged and expected. Each student is expected to participate actively in class activities and discussions.

Mid-term exam (20%):

The mid-term exam will cover materials from assigned readings and class lectures and discussions. The exam will include multiple choice, true/false questions, and short essays. Make-up exam will be granted only for a limited time and only for valid, documented reasons such as serious illness, family emergency, jury duty or military reserve obligation.

Assignments (20%):

A series of hands-on assignments will help you apply design/production skills acquired in class.

Web project (50%):

You will produce a user-centered, interactive website. You may develop your own website idea (e.g., a service, a campaign, a story, personal web portfolio) or work with a local group (e.g., BU student organization, small start-up) to create a website for the group. To complete this project, you will produce a series of “deliverables”:

#1 Proposal (5%)

#2 User research and modeling report (10%)

#3 Website prototype and report (10%)

#4 Final website (15%)

#5 Reflective report (10%)

The details of each “deliverable” will be explained in the class. If the deadline of an assignment is missed, all late work must be turned in within one week after the due date and will be downgraded for one letter grade whether it is 1 or 7 days late. No late work beyond the one-week period will be accepted. Missed assignment will receive a zero.

*Grading Scale*

A 93-100% B+ 88-89.9 C+ 78-79.9 D+ 68-69.9

A- 90-92.9 B 83-87.9 C 73-77.9 D 60-67.9

B- 80-82.9 C- 70-72.9 F below 60

**Use of Blackboard**

All class materials including additional readings, lecture slides, and assignments will be uploaded to the Blackboard course site. You are responsible for checking Blackboard (as well as your email) regularly for class work and announcements. We will also use Blackboard to submit and grade assignments.

**Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to fully aware of Boston University’s Academic Conduct Code and consequences for violations (<http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code>). Violations of this Code includes (but is not limited to) the following: cheating on exam, plagiarism, misrepresentation or falsification of data, submitting the same work in more than one course without the consent of instructors. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself thoroughly with the Code. When in doubt, consult the instructor before doing anything about which you are uncertain.

# Course Schedule

(Subject to change. Readings are due the day they are listed.)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Wk** | **Date** | **Topic** | **Readings** | **Project Due** |
| 1 | 1/21 | Overview  Class survey |  |  |
| 2 | 1/26 | The changing mediascape and interactivity | BB reading |  |
| 2 | 1/28 | An overview of design concepts and process I | Rogers et al., Ch1, Ch9;  Cooper et al., Intro, Ch1  Morville & Rosenfeld, Ch1-3 |  |
| 3 | 2/2 | An overview of design concepts and process II |  |  |
| 3 | 2/4 | Workshop: Digital/Web basics |  |  |
| 4 | 2/9 | User research and modeling I | Cooper et al., Ch2-4 | Web project #1: Proposal |
| 4 | 2/11 | Workshop: HTML |  |  |
| 5 | **2/17**  **(Tue)** | User research and modeling II | BB reading |  |
| 5 | 2/18 | Workshop: HTML |  |  |
| 6 | 2/23 | It is all about users and their experience! | Rogers et al., Ch3  Krug, Ch1-5 |  |
| 6 | 2/25 | Workshop: CSS |  |  |
| 7 | 3/2 | Fundamental of web design: Color and typeface | BB reading | Web project #2: User research and modeling report |
| 7 | 3/4 | Workshop: CSS |  |  |
| 8 | 3/9 | **Spring break!** |  |  |
| 8 | 3/11 | **Spring break!** |  |  |
| 9 | 3/16 | Information Architecture: Organization & navigation | Morville & Rosenfeld, Ch4-7  Krug, Ch6-7 |  |
| 9 | 3/18 | Workshop: Content management system |  |  |
| 10 | 3/23 | **Mid-term exam** |  |  |
| 10 | 3/25 | Workshop: Content management system |  |  |
| 11 | 3/30 | From research to strategy | Rogers et al., Ch11,  Cooper et al., Ch5,  Morville & Rosenfeld, Ch11-12. |  |
| 11 | 4/1 | Workshop: Dreamweaver |  |  |
| 12 | 4/6 | Design evaluation | Rogers et al. Ch12-13  Krug, Ch8-9 | Web project #3. Website prototype and report |
| 12 | 4/8 | Workshop: Flash-infographics |  |  |
| 13 | 4/13 | Audience measurement | BB reading |  |
| 13 | 4/15 | Workshop: Google analytics |  |  |
| 14 | 4/20 | **Patriot’s Day Holiday** |  |  |
| 14 | 4/22 | Workshop: Web production |  |  |
| 15 | 4/27 | **Presentation of final web project** |  | Web project #4 Final website |
| 15 | 4/29 | **Presentation of final web project** |  |  |

\*Web project #5 Reflective report due the following week