CSCI 443/543
User Interface Design / Human-Computer Interaction
Syllabus Spring 2016

Instructor: Yolanda Reimer
Email: reimer@cs.umt.edu
Class meeting time: MW 4:10-5:30pm
Office hours: I will have regular office hours: MW 3-4pm; F 1-2pm
I am around other times during the week, and if you find me and my door is open, feel free to stop by. I will also be happy to meet with you by appointment.

Course Description
An essential aspect of designing useful and usable products—whether they are kitchen appliances, or buildings, or software systems or mobile apps—is continual focus on the needs and behaviors of the end-users. This course will introduce you to key concepts of human behavior and principle elements of usable design, and will help you develop a critical eye for assessing the usability of everyday objects. You will engage in Usability Engineering processes as you work towards developing interactive software solutions, with a special focus on User Centered Design (UCD). You will gain experience with requirements analysis, prototyping and evaluation, all while participating in regular design "crit" (critiques) sessions with your peers. We will spend the semester working together in a studio-like environment to develop design solutions for real-world applications, and we will focus early and often on end-users throughout the entire development cycle.

Prerequisite/ Background Experience
The required prerequisite for this class is CSCI 232, or consent of the instructor. While the focus of the course is on the *design* and *evaluation* of user interfaces, you will be expected to work together with a team to implement a functional prototype. Therefore, prior programming experience in any of the following is necessary: C#, .NET, Java, Python, HTML, Dreamweaver, Flash, Javascript, etc. If you bring a strong background in graphic design, media arts, or some other related discipline, that will also be very valuable. We will discuss necessary background experience further on the first day of class.

Good oral and written communication skills are critical to your success in this class, and project assignments involve both classroom presentations and written reports. Most (but not all) assignments will be group-based, so you must commit to schedule sufficient out-of-class time to collaborate with your teammates. Classroom participation on a frequent basis will be expected throughout the term.

Please note that if you choose to take this class without the necessary prerequisites, you do so at your own risk. The instructor is not responsible for getting you up-to-speed on knowledge or skills stated in the prerequisites, nor is she responsible for scheduling difficulties you may experience due to the heavy time commitment necessary for groupwork. Projects often require substantial out-of-class time for group meetings (approximately 4-6 hours per week), which does not include the time you will spend on your own each week working on projects.

Evaluation
Your grade for the course will be evaluated as follows:
- Five projects, including a final project/presentation during final exam week. All projects will include a written report and an in-class (design crit) presentation. Most projects will involve working with the same group throughout the semester, but there may also be some individually graded projects and/or components as well.
- Two individual in-class quizzes.
- Individual sketch-outs and other class assignments.

- Class participation, including attendance.
- **Special note for Graduate students**: Since this class is a combined undergraduate/graduate level course, those taking it for graduate credit will be held to higher standards for the work they submit, and they will complete some extra work.

The weighting of class work towards your final grade is as follows.

Undergraduate

Projects (5 total)	60%
Quizzes (2)	20%
Sketch-outs & other class assignments	10%
Class participation/attendance	10%
TOTAL	**100%**

Graduate

Projects (5 total)	60%
Quizzes (2)	20%
Sketch-outs & other class assignments	10%
Class participation/attendance	5%
Extra Grad-only Assignment	5%
TOTAL	**100%**

For any projects that are group-based, you will receive the same grade as your teammates *unless* I learn that you contributed significantly less than the other group members (in which case, I reserve the right to determine your grade, which you should expect to be less than your group grade). With each group project, all group members will be asked to evaluate the contribution of others in the group; this information will be used to identify any students that fail to contribute adequately. Because you will be presenting your design solutions to the class during scheduled crit sessions, **late work will not be accepted**.

Design crits for all projects are scheduled during two class periods; this is so that we have adequate time to devote to the crits, which are an essential part of the process of design, and therefore the class. All work is due at the beginning of the first scheduled crit session for that project, regardless of when you are asked to present. I will collect project reports at the beginning of that first class period. I will not warn you in advance when you will present, so you must come prepared at the beginning of the first crit class. If you are called to present and you are not ready, you must present anyway or receive a failing grade for that component. For crit presentations, all group members must be in attendance. If you miss one of your group's presentations without prior approval from the instructor, your individual grade will automatically be lessened by at least 25% of your group's grade (and perhaps even more depending on how much you contributed to the assignment). If you are late for one of your group's presentations, your individual grade will automatically be lessened by at least 10% of your group's grade. All group members are expected to participate in the design crit presentations throughout the semester. Again, due to the highly interactive nature of the class, the reliance on design crits, and the tight schedule, **late work will not be accepted**.

The two in-class quizzes are individually based and NOT collaborative in any way (i.e., collaboration on exams is considered cheating and will be dealt with according to the Student Conduct Code).

Schedule
I will post a weekly schedule on Moodle by Friday of the previous week (at the latest). Please make sure you refer to it often to see what readings and/or assignments are due. If you miss a class where any schedule changes are announced, you and you alone are responsible for finding out that information. I will supplement class lectures with outside text readings and other additional materials which you are also responsible for. It is critical that you come to class and follow my lead as to what material will be covered on the projects, assignments and quizzes.

Important Dates
Please make a special note of the two scheduled in-class quizzes:
- **Wednesday, March 16**
- **Wednesday, April 27**.

I am unable to offer alternate dates and/or times for these quizzes, so please mark your calendar now and make sure that you will be able to attend those classes. If you miss a test without required documentation, you will receive a score of 0.

Also note that our final exam period is scheduled for **Wednesday, May 11th from 3:20-5:20pm**. We will use this time for final project presentations, and it is imperative that all class members be present.

Other Important Information
- I expect you to come to class. I will take attendance in this class, and this does count towards your final grade. In my years of teaching, I have seen that class attendance and grades are often correlated. In other words, students who come to class tend to do better and get higher grades than those who do not.

- If you miss a class, you and you alone are responsible for the material covered. This includes handouts, schedule changes, and lecture notes. Do not expect me to reiterate a class period that you missed, and please, don't ask me if you've "missed anything important" – everything we do in class is important, so the answer is always "Yes!"

- Key dates for various spring term activities/deadlines, including adding and dropping a course, can be found in the Academic Policies section of the University catalog (http://www.umt.edu/catalog/academics/academic-policy-procedure2.php)

- Also in the University catalog, review the policy on **incompletes**. In particular, note that incompletes can only be assigned when the student has "been in attendance and doing passing work up to three weeks before the end of the semester." Incompletes will not be issued simply to prevent a failing grade.

- All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php

- The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). If you have a disability that adversely affects your academic performance, and you have not already registered with DSS, please contact DSS in Lommasson 154. I will work with you and DSS to provide an appropriate accommodation. For more information, visit the Disability Services for Students website at http://www.umt.edu/dss