

**CMSI 370-01**  
**INTERACTION DESIGN**  
Fall 2013

## Assignment 0926 Feedback

As stated in the assignment, outcomes *1c* and *2b* max out at | for this assignment, because the class had not yet covered the full range of relevant concepts at this point in the semester.

Abdulrahman M. Alzaid

AbdulZaid

*1a* — Your work shows an understanding of how mental models relate to interaction design, with well-chosen illustrations of important points. You express the substance of these connections well, but mechanics and phrasing can use significant improvement. (|)

*1b* — You state, describe, and record the chosen usability metrics largely correctly. The distinction of users' familiarity with each application is an important positive aspect of your approach, with the subsequent interpretation of times as learnability vs. efficiency being the best you can do given this situation. You largely use these metrics well, except for when you attempt to add up learnability and efficiency times to make a "combined" assessment. This adding-up is not applicable to the situation—learning something new and using something familiar are very different situations. Just keep them separate throughout and your treatment of the metrics will be much better. (|)

*1c* — Your analysis focuses primarily on mental models, which is good, but makes no mention at all of guidelines, principles, or theories, and that is a big negative. There is thus virtually no indication in your report of the degree of knowledge you have of these concepts. (–)

*2a* — You have conducted a real-world usability study, and as a first go-round it is pretty decent. Measures were captured appropriately, with specific errors captured in detail and mostly proper handling of user familiarity, leading to the separation of times as either learnability or efficiency. However, your report is missing an explicit *prioritization* of usability metrics based on the tested application—you address performance on a metric-by-metric basis, but miss out on an overall statement considering *all* of the metrics; and such a statement implies some prioritization. Your documentation of the study also suffers from a number of typos, misspellings, and phrases that need rewording (see highlighted areas to get an idea of what needs more polish). Enough spoilers here to drag the proficiency down. (/)

*2b* — Your mental model discussion is the strongest part of your analysis, but unfortunately it is also the *only* part of your analysis. This proficiency is not dragged down as much as *1c* because your mental model analysis at least shows that you can *use* class concepts to make well-founded interaction design decisions, but nevertheless you were explicitly asked to go beyond that. (/)

*4d* — There's some disappointment that you weren't able to give LaTeX a go, but that is just a personal observation and not a knock on this outcome. The lack of guidelines, principles, and theories is the primary drag on this outcome, because it implies a gap in how you used the available information given in class to perform and report on this usability study. (|)

*4e* — You committed and pushed successfully, but (a) you sent this to a different repository and (b) you had only one commit. Between the two, it is (b) that is more severe—the very point of using version control is to allow you to make progress in distinct milestones. This was your first go so we won't be too severe, but definitely look to commit more often in future work, especially the programming assignments. (|)

*4f* — Submitted on time, although not exactly as specified in the instructions. (|)

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### **Updated feedback based on commits up to 12/11/2013; only re-reviewed outcomes are included:**

*1a* — Your revised paper retains the understanding and illustration of mental models seen before, but mechanics and phrasing issues are still there and impede the communication of your results. (|)

*1b* — The separation of learnability from efficiency throughout is noted and appreciated, but there are still many glitches in how you use the numbers, such as adding up learnability times instead of averaging them (the totals are OK for comparative analysis, but they miscommunicate how long it *typically* takes to learn or to accomplish a task), plus some real mismatches in the text (especially for the second task) between what is in the charts and what the text is saying. (|)

*1c* — The addition of some guidelines and primarily principles (ISO 9241) definitely improves this proficiency. However, you just state the name of the principle (“suitability for the task”) and apply it right away without explaining them. This is particularly important because you chose concepts that were not at all explored in depth in class. You also mistook direct manipulation for a principle. Sure, this is just one thing, but it is one *big* thing because we spent a lot of class time on it, and repeatedly referred to it as an *interaction style*. It is big that this paper still mistakenly labels direct manipulation despite all of this attention. (/)

*2a* — The word “priority” appears in your paper, but is not at all used the way it is intended. The paper seems to apply “priority” on a per-product basis (e.g., “Google users’ learnability, which was prioritized...”) —that is not at all how it is meant to be used. Typos and misspellings are better than before, but many phrases still need rewording. Between the misuse of the “prioritization of metrics” and the remaining writing issues, an increase in proficiency remains unwarranted. (/)

*2b* — You now include some guidelines and principles in drawing your conclusions about the three products. As stated in *1b*, without a statement of their definitions, it is hard to tell if you used the concepts properly. Further, the conclusion you draw from these guidelines and principles seems to contradict the one that you stated regarding mental models. If Google Music’s mental model was significantly worse-communicated than the others, then how can it be said to also have a “suitable and famous” user interface? That last section still needs to be more cohesive and better-grounded. (/)

*4d* — You have successfully added a few more sources to your paper, especially in the area of guidelines and principles, but you don’t cite them. Still, at least you have better information than before. (+)

*4e* — Your commit messages and frequency are a little better, but your file management approach is puzzling. It is strange enough that you are committing a PDF and not its source, *FinalEdit.pdf*—but it’s odd that you have these two other side files, and your truly final file was placed in something new. The intent and reasons for these choices are not clear to me. (|)