CST315 Software Enterprise: Individual Project Reflection   **(Fall 2015 revision)**

Techniques employed in class

There are a number of techniques we cover in this class with respect to design processes, user experience (UX), and software systems design (SD). The list of concept areas for this class is shown below (from the syllabus):

       1st half, reflections due at time of midterm (see schedule for exact day):
1. The User-centered Design Process
2. UX: User Modeling
3. UX: Interaction Design
4. UX: Principles of UI Design (Visual Design)

       2nd half, reflections due at time of final (see schedule for exact day):
5. SD: Interaction Modeling
6. SD: Behavior Modeling
7. SD: Structure/System Modeling
8. SD: Design Patterns and Architectural Styles

What we would like you to do at the time of the midterm presentations, and to continue to do in the 2nd half of the semester, is reflect on the utility of concepts/techniques as we cover them, and as you practice them in context of your project. *For each module, select one of the techniques discussed in this class to reflect upon* – it should be a technique you were involved in during the project. For each technique, please answer the following:

- Do you think the technique would be useful on "real projects"? Explain
- Are there particular situations or types of projects where you think where the technique might be more useful than in others? Explain
- Are you employing the technique on your project?
    - a. If yes, explain
        - i. Why did you choose to use it?
        - ii. What artifacts you have produced and in what iteration?
        - iii. How useful was it? Did it work out like you expected?
        - iv. Will you continue to use it in the future?
    - b. If no, explain
        - i. Why not?
        - ii. Do you think it would have helped if you had?
        - iii. Are you considering using it in the future?

For each technique, you should create a "reflection entry" (about a page). Two short examples are attached. Note that we have not discussed every possible technique you could use in your project. For example, you have surely created Personas for User Modeling since we discussed them, but you may also have done additional forms of User Modeling. If you wish to reflect upon a technique from the textbook (not discussed in slides), or from other classes, please check with the instructor or TA ahead of time.

This journal style approach is an evidence-based mechanism to help us understand 1) what you have done, 2) your decision-making processes in design, and 3) how well you are contextualizing the material from class. It can take some practice to properly write a journal entry, but there are some absolute "DOs" and "DON'Ts":

DO/DON'T:
1. DO Use complete sentences and clear articulate language. Short non-explanatory phrases simply will not count. At the same time be concise; we don't expect novels, nor do we want to read them.
2. DO Point to evidence – DO NOT write "I did some of that technique XXX about concept YYY and think ZZZ". Say "I did 40% o the work on our original prototype sketch for the purpose of understanding the flow (storyboard) and gathering information from the end user. I think this form of storyboarding is useful because [elaborate here] but is also challenging because [describe challenges here]".
3. DO NOT skip the questions we ask you to answer up above. If you are having trouble answering a given question we list, say so. The questions are in part to train you to think of your learning process in the context of the project process a particular way.

Submission

For this submission, we expect you to submit individually in a Word formatted document:
- When you submit your document to Blackboard, name it <asurite>_midsemester_reflections.docx.
- As always, make your work presentable. Follow the instructions here carefully, ensure any images are readable, use proper grammar, spelling, and punctuation, and express your opinions in a clear, articulate style.

EXAMPLE 1 (HYPOTHETICAL!)

Concept/Technique: User Modeling/Personas
1. Do you think the technique would be useful on "real projects"? Explain

I really didn't get Personas when the instructor was talking about them. Sounds like we're just making up stuff about a fictional person. The lab helped some but it still seemed all rather made up. So I'm not sure how useful they would be on a real project.

2. Are there particular situations or types of projects where you think where the technique might be more useful than in others? Explain

I am not sure how they would be useful on any real project, but I suppose one possibility is in situations where you cannot readily identify the roles of different users in the system.

3. Are you employing the technique on your project?
   a. If yes, explain
      i. Why did you choose to use it?
      ii. What artifacts you have produced and in what iteration?
      iii. How useful was it? Did it work out like you expected?
      iv. Will you continue to use it in the future?
   b. If no, explain
      i. Why not?
      ii. Do you think it would have helped if you had?
      iii. Are you considering using it in the future?

Yes, we are using them because the instructor made us. We paired up in our teams and came up with Personas. Me and my partner came up with 3 personas, "Julie", "Janet", and "Joseph". We then met with the entire team and unioned our sets of personas to a set of 5, our 3 plus "Julio", and "Javier".

After creating these with my partner and discussing in the team, I started to see them being more useful. We really didn't have a good idea of the different classes of users for our system, so these helped. So they turned out more useful than I expected though they still feel a bit made up to me. I might use them in the future if I'm working on a project where I am struggling to understand the user roles, or has specialized UX requirements.

EXAMPLE 2 (HYPOTHETICAL!)

Concept/Technique: User Modeling/Use Case Actors
1. Do you think the technique would be useful on "real projects"? Explain

I thought Use Case Actors would be the best thing to do on real projects as we had done some of them last year when we did use cases. But we didn't talk about them in the context of User Modeling last year.

2. Are there particular situations or types of projects where you think where the technique might be more useful than in others? Explain

I think they would be useful on almost any project; I have a hard time thinking of where they would not be useful.

3. Are you employing the technique on your project?
   a. If yes, explain
      i. Why did you choose to use it?
      ii. What artifacts you have produced and in what iteration?
      iii. How useful was it? Did it work out like you expected?
      iv. Will you continue to use it in the future?
   b. If no, explain
      i. Why not?
      ii. Do you think it would have helped if you had?
      iii. Are you considering using it in the future?

We are not using Use Case Actors on our project, which is kind of annoying to me because they would seem easy to do. But the instructor made us do Personas and the team felt it was redundant to do Use Case Actors. I personally think it would have helped because these are scenario-driven and familiar, so yes I would plan on using them in the future.